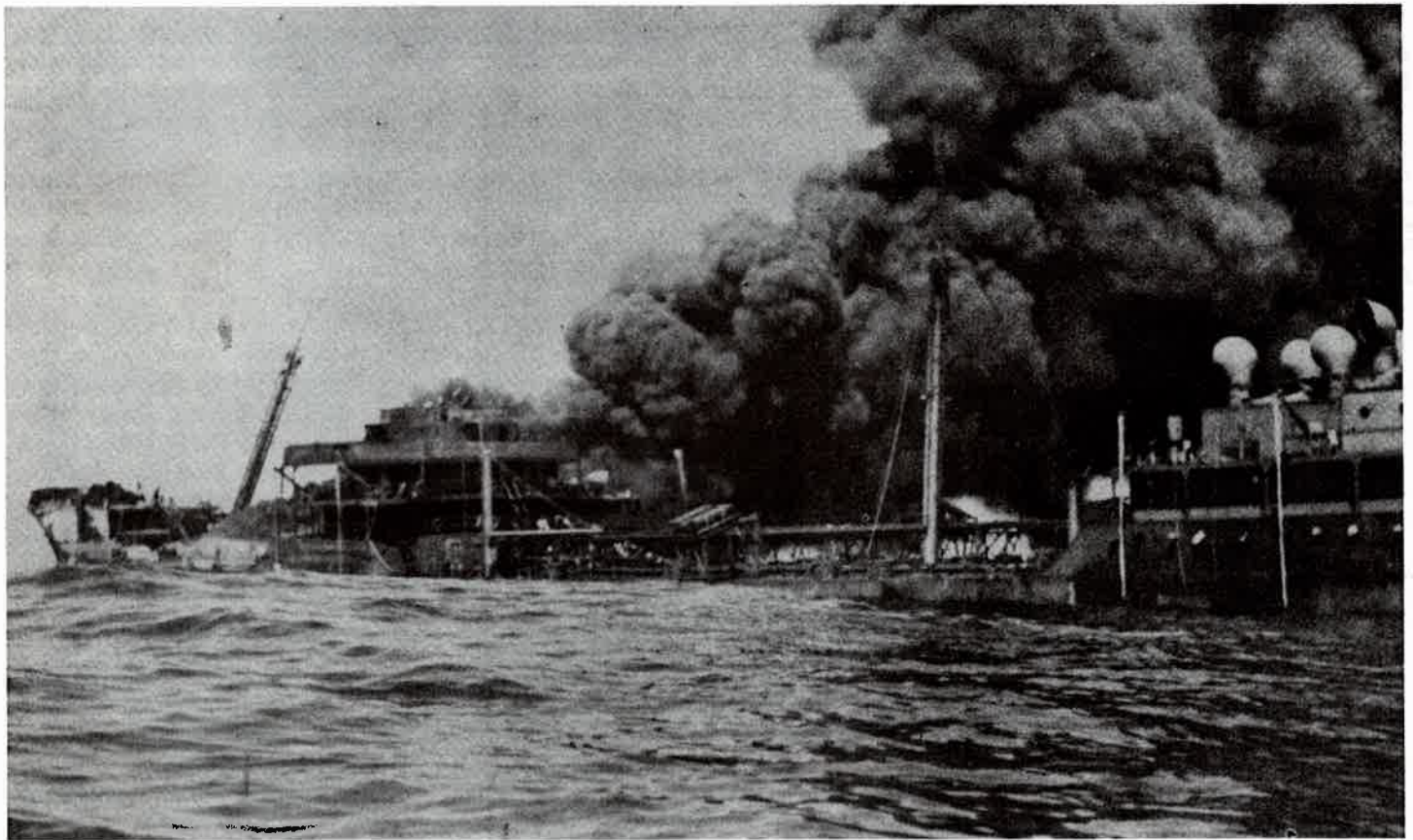


FEB. / MAR. 1997

# THE POINTER

*This is a Salute to All the  
Men Who Rode the Tankers*



**This is the Reason to Place Armed Guard Crews Aboard!**

The Tanker S.S. ESSO BOSTON, was torpedoed and shelled by the German Submarine U-130 (Kals) at 1320 ship's time on April 12, 1942 about 300 miles Northeast of St. Martins, B.W.I. while en route alone and unarmed from La Guira, Venezuela to Halifax, Nova Scotia with 88,000 barrels of crude oil. She carried a crew of 37. There were no casualties.

## Officers for 1996

Charles A. Lloyd, Chairman & Secretary  
5712 Partridge Lane  
Raleigh, N.C. 27609  
1-919-876-5537\*

Neal and Dot Vermillion, 1997 Hosts  
8286 Mary Lee Lane  
Laurel, MD 20723-1171  
1-301-776-6734

Lonnie D. Lloyd, Treasurer

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L. D. Lloyd ..... NC  
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Lyle Kell ..... WA  
Robert Aldrich ..... NV

## ATTENTION

You know where you are.

You know where we are.

We know where we are.

But we don't always know where you are.

Please notify us when you move.

## Non-Profit Organization

Tax Exempt No. 74-2316668

# THE POINTER



## THE PLANE SHOOTER

Our Motto: "We aim- To Deliver" and "We-Did"

USN Armed Guard World War II Veterans

"PLAIN SHOOTING FOR PLANE SHOOTERS"

Dear All of "Youse" Guys and "Youse" Ladies:

February, 1997

Hope this finds you healthy and in good spirits. After two months of elections, Holidays and breaking all the New Years resolutions, just maybe I can get back to catching up with the Armed Guard business of the day, and putting the "POINTER" together again. I hope I have not forgotten all the things misplaced that I wanted to bring to your attention.

First, the S.S. JOHN W. BROWN "WILL NOT" make the trip up the St. Lawrence River to Chicago in 1997. Martin Vallee called to say he will try again in 1999 and has started making arrangements already. See REUNIONS on the BROWN'S itinerary sailing date for 1997.

Hilda and I did make the Orlando, Florida Mini-Reunion in January and it was tough to leave 86 degree weather and the Bikini bathing suits and head North!! Now! I know why so many "SNOWBIRDS" head south for the winter. As usual, the Clarion Hotel was great. Rudy and Ellie Kozak, Harold Ceaser, Jack and Corinne Renaud and so many others made our visit an enjoyable one. We needed to get away from the "HURRICANE FRAN" aftermath. Fran kept us from attending the Rochester, New York Mini-Reunion and I know it was great from the letters I received and John and Shevlin are to be commended. I regret that I am unable to attend them all for it does me good to hear an Ol'Salt say to another as I did at Orlando, "I was on that ship at that time!! What's your name? Hey! I remember you!!!!"

I do take time out daily to check out the weather across the U.S.A. and I feel sorry for the ones effected by the rains, blizzards, droughts, tornadoes etc. I think many of us have been hit over the last few years. To those of you who were concerned about us and called or wrote, we want to say "THANK YOU" for your thoughts. Financially, I did not suffer as my insurance company stuck by me "LIKE A GOOD NEIGHBOR." I advise all of you to check out your insurance policy and get the best coverage you can afford. It sure helps "IF" it hits home!!

I would like to report on the St. Louis Reunion finances that Al Colella had sent \$7,000 as soon as he could after the reunion from the bank balance and another \$7,000 in December to close out the 1996 Reunion account. The \$14,000 has been deposited and it helped partially on the July/Aug, Nov/Dec. and this "POINTER." Approximately 2300 of you donated in 1996 and we survived again. A great many had donated in the past and for this, I would like to thank you. It keeps the expenses paid. We have located over 14,200

Officers - Gunners - Signalmen - Radiomen - Medics - Waves - Boatswains - Coxswains - Ship's Company - Radarmen

**\*Remember, I can't move as fast as I did when I was in my twenties!  
When you call, let the phone ring so I can get to it! cal**



now with about 11,500 still on the mailing list. I will have to take many of you off the mailing list as I do not have your ships listed, I have not received any donations nor have I even heard from you after 3 or more years. The "POINTER" isn't being returned to me and someone is getting it and I don't know who. To all you widowers who have not requested to stay on the mailing, you will get this POINTER but if I don't get a request to keep you on, I will delete you one month after I mail this one. JUST DROP ME A POSTCARD STATING, "KEEP ME ON THE MAILING" and sign.

Since I typed the above paragraph, I received about 300 envelopes from Neal Vermillion where many of you had sent donations to help with the reunion. Some of these now have a NUMBER behind their names for the first time to indicate that you have donated to help and Neal advises me that he has more to send, so I will hold off til the next "POINTER" before I start deleting names. This is my way of keeping tabs to the best of my ability. Took me about 6 hours to mark them but I did. Thanks! cal

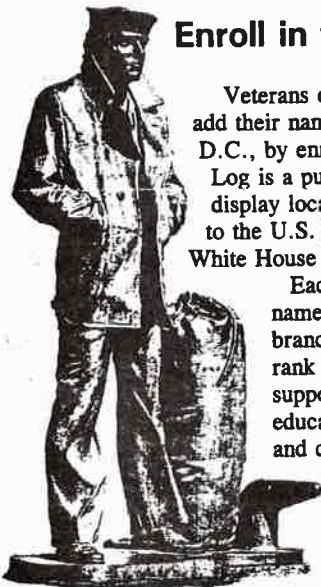
## — In Memory —

### Deceased shipmates since Nov./Dec. 1996 POINTER

Behrens	Robert C.	Youngstown	NY	Margaret	8-25-96
Carey	Lawrence H.	Frederick	Md	Della	10/30/96
Clay	Darwin D.	Aberdeen	SD	Alice	1/3/97
Daddazio	Vincent R.	Rochester	NY	*	1/3/97
Daly	Richard F.	Stamford	Ct	Claire	11/23/96
Early	William F.	Kings Mountain	NC	Martha	11/29/96
Hill	Raymond F.	Harwich Port	Ma	Barbara	12/22/96
Hoeft	Leslie M.	Tigard	OR	Jacqueline	1-25-97
Janke	John C.	Longview	Wa	Rose Kathy	1/18/97
Johnson	Carl F.	Hill City	SD	Pearl	1/20/97
Kuker	Otto W.	Fayetteville	NC	Opal	7/8/96
Lieb	James	Champaign	IL	Betty	6/96
McDuffie	Walter	Rockingham	NC	Faye	8/21/94
Mede	Frank J. "Stretch"	Port Richie	FL	*	2-4-97
Miller	Louis E.	Maple Valley	Wa	Evelyn	1/17/96
Phillips	Kenneth J.	Bowdon	Ga	Wawena	11/30/96
Prevost	John M.	Portage	Mi	Mary	8/7/96
Rooper	Ralph B.	The Dalles	Or	Ruth	1/1/97
Schaaf	Ernest H.	Bronx	NY	Ann	11/17/96
Swanson	Verne O.	Lidgerwood	ND	Sally	11/20/95
Tomlinson	Kenneth R.	Chicopee	Ma	Vivienne	1/18/97
Traina	Tony	Campbell	Ca	JEWEL	5/12/96
Williams	Earl	Bethany	Mo	*	1996

#### THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY WASHINGTON

## Preserve your naval heritage in a Washington monument.



Lone Sailor statue at the Navy Memorial  
© S. Bleifeld

### Enroll in the Navy Memorial Log.

Veterans of America's sea services are invited to add their names to a living memorial in Washington, D.C., by enrolling in the Navy Memorial Log. The Log is a publicly accessible, interactive video display located in the Naval Heritage Center next to the U.S. Navy Memorial—midway between the White House and the Capitol.

Each Log entry contains the entrant's name, date and place of birth, dates and branch of naval service and highest rate or rank attained. Navy Log enrollments help support the Memorial's values-based educational programs, which honor, preserve and celebrate America's naval heritage.

A Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard or Merchant Marine veteran desiring to enroll should send his or her name, date and place of birth, dates of naval service, highest rate or rank, and a \$20 tax-deductible enrollment donation to:

**Navy Log—REUN97  
P.O. Box 96570  
Washington, DC 20077-7685**

Enrollments make welcome gifts to any veteran. Sponsored enrollments are also appropriate from relatives of deceased naval service veterans.

Questions? Please call 1-800-NAVY LOG, extension 730, Monday-Friday, 0900-1700 Eastern Time.

The President of the United States takes pleasure in  
presenting the SILVER STAR MEDAL to

**ALBERT F. WOHLERS, SEAMAN FIRST CLASS  
UNITED STATES NAVAL RESERVE**

for service as set forth in the following

#### CITATION:

"For gallantry in action and heroic devotion to duty while serving as a member of the United States Armed Guard on board the S.S. CAMPFIRE during attacks by German aircraft in August and September, 1942. While his ship plowed through high seas under a curtain of rain and fog, and enemy planes, flying low, fanned out and dropped their torpedoes into the convoy, WOHLERS stood by his gun, directing its fire with cool efficiency, and assisted in the repair of guns damaged during the engagement. Coming within range of fire from a nearby ship which strafed the poop and riddled the rigging, WOHLERS became seriously wounded, but, in spite of acute pain and waning strength, continued to give every assistance to his shipmates without thought for himself. His fine courage and utter disregard for his own personal safety were in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service."

For the President,

*Frank Knox*  
Secretary of the Navy.

*The above piece was sent in by Albert F. Wohlers, 605 N.E. 69th St., Kansas City, MO 64118, (816) 436-0748. His purple heart is now displayed on the S.S. John W. Brown. Through their endeavors, Al and others like him kept the supply lines open to our Allied fighting men and women and brought food and other materials to the civilian population.*

# ★ ★ ★ ★ REUNIONS ★ ★ ★ ★

## **"REGIONAL, MINI-REUNIONS AND GET-TOGETHERS"**

**Support these local meetings  
while you're able.**

\*\*\*\*\*

### **OOOPS!! COLUMN!! BEFORE I FORGET IT AGAIN!!**

Eloise Moran will be hosting the LADIES TEA PARTY again at the Alexandria, Va. National Reunion. It is listed in the ITINERARY/RESERVATION - Page 18, JUL/AUG POINTER and it's \$12.00 each and you include it with the cost of other things you will take part in. It was beautifully arranged and all had a great time last year. I hope you will join them and make it successful again.

\*\*\*\*\*

### **S.S. JOHN W. BROWN SAILING DATES FOR 1997**

**May 4-5, 1997:** Alexandria, Va-ARMED GUARD NATIONAL REUNION. Short Cruise. May arrive earlier-stay later?

**May 24, 1997:** Chesapeake Cruise out of Baltimore, Md.

**May 30-June 1:** Philadelphia, Pa. Marine Day. Alongside the pier at Penn's Landing. No Cruise.

**July:** New London, Ct with short cruise.

**September 6:** Chesapeake Bay Cruise

**Mid Sept.:** Charleston, S.C. Maritime Festival, with short cruise.

**Mid Oct.:** Galveston, Tx. Texas Parks Service. Reenactment of Tarawa Invasion. Short Cruises from Charleston via stop in Florida, thence, on to Galveston. (All one voyage).

Contact: **Project Liberty Ship**, P.O. Box 25846, Highland, Station, Baltimore, Md. 21224-0846. (Adopt a Rivet Donation of \$56.00 from same address encouraged.) Dry docking in the fall at undisclosed port.

Martin Vallee was unsuccessful in getting the BROWN up the St. Lawrence River in 1996 but will try in 1999. I will keep you posted in future "POINTERS." cal

\*\*\*\*\*

**SANDPOINT, ID** Area Contact: Milan and Dottie LaMarche, 1113 W. Main, Sandpoint, Id. 83864-1852, 208-263-4271 for meetings..

**GREAT LAKES NAVAL ASSOC.,** PO Box 88 - 6835, Great Lakes, IL 60088, 847-662-5545. Att: JEFF JEFFERS.

**THE AMERICAN ASSOC. OF NAVY HOSPITAL CORPSMEN (AAONHC)**  
Contact: Ned Johnson, 224 Jackson St., De Quincy, LA. 70633-4128, 318-786-2082.

**FAIRVIEW HEIGHTS, ILLINOIS**  
Armed Guard area meets at McDonalds in Fairview Hgts. on the 2nd Saturday of each month, 9:30-11:00. Contact: Skipper Theodore Kawula, 3232 Carlson Ave., Granite City, Il. 62040. A.G. and M.M. "GET-TO-GETHER."

**SACRAMENTO, CA. AREA ARMED GUARD CREW, WIVES AND FRIENDS:** 10:00 A.M.- 3rd Thursday, at BRADSHAW RESTAURANT, HIWAY 50 at Bradshaw Exit. Welcome Hosts are: Bill and Doris Welch, 6048 Holstein Way, Sacramento, Ca. 95822-2955, 916-428-4681 and Peewee and Charlotte Hunter, 916-354-0623. Come and enjoy!!

**ORANGE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA**  
Area Contact: Walter Davis, 2604 No. Tustin Ave. #F, Santa Ana, Ca. 92705, 714-997-7119; or, Curtis Mellin, 3173 Bern Dr., Laguna Beach, Ca. 92651, 714-494-6603.

**ALABAMA CREW** Contact Gene Pugh, 3131 Hale Dr., Huntsville, Al. 35805, 205-533-6049 for meeting at the Golden Corral, 3117 Lorna Rd., Hoover, Al. until further notice.

**INDIANA CREW** meets each month on the last Saturday at 11:00 A.M. at LOUIE'S Restaurant located on U.S. 24 West and Wilkerson St. intersection, Logansport, In. 46947. Hosts are: Forrest and Annabelle Spencer, 219-753-7066.

**GEORGIA CHAPTER** Skipper Bill Burton, 251 Cardigan Cir., Lilburn, Ga. 30247, 770-381-5395 and the Ga. Crew meet at SHONEY'S, Exit 38, Lilburn, 11 AM "FIRST MONDAY."

**PBY CATALINA INTERNATIONAL ASSOC.** CONTACT: Jas. Thompson, 1510 Kabel Dr., New Orleans, La. 70131, 504-392-1227, FOR REUNION IN SAN DIEGO, CA. 10/8-10/97. HAVE FUN Y'ALL.

**ROCHESTER, N.Y. AREA ARMED GUARD and MERCHANT SEAMEN** of WW II contact John and Mary Shevlin, 37 Winfield Rd., Rochester, N.Y. 14622-2212, 716-467-2057. A LUNCH MEETING is held at 11:00 A.M. on the "2ND" TUESDAY at the "OLD COUNTRY

BUFFET," Culver-Ridge Plaza East Ridge Rd., IRONDEQUOIT, NY. Vincent Daddazio, 100 Dunn Tower Dr. #1 A-404, Rochester, NY 14606, 716-429-6653 assists John. Their Northeast MINI-REUNION was great according to those who attended.

**IOWA CREW** meets every 2nd Wednesday, 10:00 A.M. at the "VALLEY WEST INN," 3535 Westown Parkway, West Des Moines, Iowa, off I-235. Arnie and Mary Latare, 601 34th St. W., Des Moines, Ia. 50265, 515-225-1084 are the hosts. They've got it together for you!

**BROOKLYN, N.Y. AREA: CONTACT MIKE MOLINARI,** 1422 EAST 54TH ST., BROOKLYN, N.Y. 11234, 718-444-8449. THEY MEET THE 3RD THURSDAY OF THE MONTH AT KING'S PLAZA DINER, 4124 AVE 'U' BETWEEN HENDRICKSON and COLEMAN at 10 A.M. They have a great time, too.

**NEBRASKA** Host, Moe Carlton, 6601 Benton St., Lincoln, Ne. 68507, 402-466-1058 holds an 11:00 LUNCHEON on the FIRST MONDAY of each month at FARABEES RESTAURANT on 58TH and OLD CHANEY ROAD.

**WILKES-BARRE, PA. AREA** Host Delbert Lennon, P.O. Box 772, Wilkes-Barre, Pa. 18703, reports that they hold a 4th Saturday of each month meeting at the MARK II RESTAURANT, 1020 Wilkes Barre Township Blvd., Wilkes Barre, Pa. Lennon's Tel. 717-467-2161, weekdays only.

HOSTS Alvin and Thelma Kemble, 8150 Chamber Hill Rd., Harrisburg, Pa. 17111, 717-566-8728 announce they hold their "FIRST THURSDAY" of each month meeting for their area at the "HOSS'S STEAK HOUSE" in HUMMELSTOWN, PA. at 1:00 P.M. SOUNDS GREAT!!

**KEYSTONE MM CHAPTER** invites all ARMED GUARD to their meetings. Contact: Geo. K. Bathie, 580 Melissa Ln., State College, Pa. 16803-1221, Phone/Fax 814-237-0329 They meet on the 4th Sat. of each month at a 12 noon luncheon at the "DAYS INN MOTEL," Altoona, PA.

**WESTERN N.C. AREA MEETS AT THE "MILLS RIVER RESTAURANT,"** MILL'S RIVER, N.C. ON THE "4TH THURSDAY" OF EACH MONTH. "LUNCHEON" starts at 11:30 AM.



Contact: Crayton Hall, PO Box 39, 88 Wilkie Way, Fletcher, N.C. 28732, 704-684-4588.

**ILL-WISC. CREW** Contact: Joe Esposito, 328 S. Michigan, Addison, Il. 60101, 708-832-2978 and Mike Pavilich, P.O. Box 2347, Bridgeview, Il. 60455, 708-481-6468 for meetings.

**Wilmington, N.C.** Armed Guard hold a 1ST WEDNESDAY monthly meeting, 9:30 A.M. at WHITEY'S Restaurant, 4501 Market St., Wilmington. Host is George W. Cameron, 611 Middle Sound Rd., Lot 16, Wilmington, N.C. 28405, 910-686-4193.

**PHILADELPHIA-DELAWARE VALLEY PA** Area Armed Guard hold an 11:30 A.M.-2ND WEDNESDAY monthly meeting at the AMERICAN LEGION, FALLS TWP POST #834, FALLSINGTON, PA. 19054, 215-295-9858 at 11:30 A.M. HOSTS: AL AND NORMA FARRARA, 45 UPPER HILL TOP RD., YARDLEY, PA. 19067, 215-493-9134.

**SOUTHWEST OHIO HOSTS** Bob and Dot Ober, 7115 Dunn Rd., Cincinnati, Ohio 45230, 513-231-3181 hold an 11:30 Luncheon on the "2ND MONDAY EVERY OTHER MONTH" starting on DEC. 9TH, 1996, at "TOMMY'S BUFFET," 10784 READING RD., EAVENDALE, Oh., 513-733-3663.

**WESTERN RESERVE CHAPTER OF A.M.M VETERANS OF EASTERN OHIO** meet the 3rd Thurs. of each month at "THE OLD COUNTRY BUFFET" at "THE SHOPS at BOARDMAN'S PARK," 387 BOARDMAN-POLAND Rd., Boardman, Oh at 11:30 AM. Contact Howard Brown, 2023 Thalia Ave., Youngstown, Oh, 330-783-0996. Armed Guard are encouraged to meet together. ATTEND!!

**DEMS** - Contact: DOUG SEPHTON, RCNA-DEMS, 203 ANNE ST. NORTH, BARRIE, ONTARIO, CN L4N 4T4 for information on the "ROYAL CANADIAN NAVAL ASSOCIATION." I understand they will be in Burlington, Ontario for their 1997 Reunion. ALL U.S. NAVY ARMED GUARD AND MERCHANT CREWS ARE WELCOMED. Wouldn't it be great if we could have an American/Canadian Armed Guard/Merchant Marine/DEMS National Reunion together in 1999. (As long as it's not held in the winter)!!

**GREATER PORTLAND, OREGON** ARMED GUARD MEETS WITH THE OREGON CHAPTER AMMV THIRD

MONDAY, 11:30 A.M. at NORTH'S CHUCK WAGON, TIGARD, OR. Contact: George Goode, 4017 S.E. Aldercrest Rd., Milwaukie, Oregon 97222, 503-659-1925.

The "NORTH-WEST PASSAGE", "AK-OR-WA-ID" holds a LUNCHEON AT 1400 HOURS ON THE 3RD WEDNESDAY AT THE BELL'S RESTAURANT, 8501 FIFTH AVE N.E., NORTH SEATTLE, WA. One mile South of Northgate Mall. Contact: Bob Heitzinger, 9227 169th Place NE, Redmond, Wa. 98052, 206-524-3100; or, Billie and Richard Kohse, 2304 Lister Rd., N.E. Olympia, Wa. 98506-3616, 360-456-1946; or, Don and Pearl Werner, 18605 N.E. 219th St., Battleground, Wa. 98604, 206-687-3630. ANOTHER GREAT CREW WELCOMES YOU!!

**NORTHWEST REGIONAL MINIREUNION** will be held 4/15-17/97 at the BEST WESTERN ICICLE INN, 505 Hwy. 2, Leavenworth, Wa 98826, 1-800-558-2438. Contact Milford and Laura Vangstad, 313 2nd Ave, P.O. Box 1326, Zillah, Wa. 98953, 509-829-5579. Vic and Martha Roberts will Co-Host.

**WYOMING** Armed Guard Skipper Charles Gray, P.O. Box 126, Fort Duchesne, Utah 84078 reports that their next Mini will be in Torrington, Wy. on 6/14/97. They are also erecting a ROCKY MOUNTAIN ARMED GUARD MEMORIAL.

**LANSING, MICH.** Area holds a "2nd" WEDNESDAY of the ODD MONTHS at the "CORAL GABLES RESTAURANT," 2838 E. Grand River Ave., East Lansing, Mi., 517-337-1311. Hosts are Carl Mescher, 508 Wayland, East Lansing, Mi. 48823, 517-332-1027; or, Martin Vallee, 1412 Brookwood, Flint, Mi. 48503, 810-235-3530. Vallee is trying to get financial help from cities along the Lakes to sponsor the S.S. JOHN W. BROWN up the St. Lawrence River as far over as Cleveland, Detroit and Chicago in 1999 if he can get ship's O.K. OK?

**KENTUCKY CREW:** Contact Joe and Earlene Foreman, P.O. Box 99303, Jeffersonstown, Ky. 40269, 502-267-4576; or, James and Norma Close, 4036 Preston Hwy., Louisville, Ky 40223, 502-366-8966 as they are the Hosts for a "3RD THURSDAY" 9:30 BREAKFAST at SHONEY'S RESTAURANT at Shelby and Eastern Parkway.

The "RHODE ISLAND CHAPTER" of ARMED GUARD VETERANS have a "LUNCHEON MEETING" on the 1st

Wed. of every month at NOON at BICKFORDS in Warwick. R.I. Gerry and Lena Greaves, 143 E. Killingly Road, Foster, RI 02825, 401-647-2212 are your hosts!!

**OKLAHOMA CREW** contact RALPH McNALLY, P.O. Box 423, Skiatook, Okla., (918) 396-2693; or, Jim Carlton, 519 E. 6th St., Bristow, Ok. 74010, 918-367-6764 on their meetings at SHONEY'S, 21ST ST. and SHERIDAN RD., TULSA, OK.

**TOPEKA, KANSAS** Area meets on the "FIRST THURSDAY" of each month at 8:30 A.M. at the TOPEKA PLAZA INN with DON GLEASON, 2405 N.W. Cross, Topeka, Ks. 66606, 913-234-6087 and Dean Vining, 1026 S.W. Cambridge Ave., Topeka, Ks. 66604-1716, 913-273-1247 as hosts.

The **WICHITA, KS MERCHANT MARINES** WW II Veterans CONTACT: Glen Trimble, 1725 Woodrow Ct., Wichita, Ks. 67203. Glen has also notified me that they will hold their 7th Mini-Reunion in Wichita, Ks. 4/25-26/1997. Wilfred Bergkamp, 530 Homestead, Colwich, Ks 67030 is the Armed Guard Coordinator. You'll have time to get to ALEXANDRIA, VA!!

The **MO-KAN CREW** will meet on the 3RD TUESDAY of each month and the location is: D.A.V. Chapter #2, 8787 Old Santa Fe Rd., Kansas City, Mo. 64138, near the intersection of 87th St. and Blue Ridge Blvd. at 11:00 A.M. with Stan DeFoe, 4308 South Osage Ave., Independence, Mo. 64055-4645, 816-373-5890 and Bill Sears, 8505 NE 56th St., Kansas City, Mo. 64119, 816-453-2179 as hosts.

The **UPPER PA HOLD THEIR MEETINGS** at PLATZ'S RESTAURANT, 101 Harrit Rd., Lehighton Pa. 18235, 610-377-1819 come Spring. CONTACT: Clint Barr, 2340 Third St., Easton, Pa. 18042, 610-258-3056.

**LITTLE FERRY, N.J. AREA** meet on the 1ST TUESDAY of EACH MONTH, 11:30 AM luncheon at TRACEY'S RESTAURANT #4 Bergen Pike, Little Ferry NJ 07643. Host for this area will be William and Irene Yansick, 80 Charlton Ave., Lodi, N.J. 07644, 201-473-6640.

**PITTSBURGH, PA. CREW** meet on the "3rd Sat." for a NOON LUNCHEON at the GREENTREE MARRIOTT. CONTACT: Hilary Makowski, 202 Wedgewood Crt., Carnegie, Pa. 15106, (412)-429-8510. They have some great YANKEES.

**CHICOPEE-LUDLOW, MA HOSTS** Tom and Priscilla Dufresne, 289 Munsing St., Ludlow, Ma. 01056, 413-583-8580 hold a "2ND SUNDAY" 9 A.M. BREAKFAST at the MOOSE LODGE #1849, 244 FULLER RD., CHICOPEE, MA. and are assisted by: Sam Pitittieri, 413-592-1854; Louis Carr, 413-783-5904; and Geo. Hurley, 413-593-3286.

**COLORADO CREW: EVERYONE** is invited to attend their FIRST (1st) TUESDAY of the month LUNCHEON at the EMBASSY SUITES, 4444 Havana St., (I-70 and Havana) Denver, Co. 80226, 303-988-5583. Contact Ed Jones, 616 S. Carr St., Lakewood, Co. 80226, 303-988-5583.

**ALBANY, N.Y. AREA HOSTS** Henry and Joyce Carringi, 11 BULLARD AVE., QUEENSBURY, N.Y. 12804, 518-793-0326 and crew meet at 12 NOON, "4TH" THURSDAY" of each month at the "WATERVLIET ARSENAL OFFICER'S CLUB," WATERVLIET, N.Y.

**S.C. CREW CONTACT:** Jeff and Mabel Haselden, 120 Richardson Blvd., Lugoff, S.C. 29078, 803-438-1491 for their meetings.

**RICHMOND, VA.** Crew meets at 12:30 PM for LUNCHEON at MORRISON'S Cafe, 7035 W. Broad St., Richmond, Va. on the "2ND SAT." Hosts are Clarence and Helen Durham, 4813 Lowells Rd., Richmond, Va. 23224, 804-233-6023.

**NORFOLK, VA** Contact: Reginald Dolliver, 3820 Amberly Forest Pl., Virginia Beach, Va. 23456, 804-471-6397 for their meetings on the LAST SATURDAY OF THE MONTH at the OLD COUNTRY BUFFET, 1952 Laskin Rd., Virginia Beach, Va. at "HILLTOP REGENCY SHOPPING PLAZA."

**ROANOKE, VA. AREA** meets on the 2nd Friday of each month at the ROANOKER Restaurant, 2522 Colonial Ave., Roanoke, Va. at 11:30 A.M. and Bill Miller may have to give up the position of SKIPPER due to eye problems. Ralph and Myra Swillinger, 734 Estates Rd. SE, Roanoke, Va. 24014, 540-427-1927 have volunteered to Skipper the crew if necessary. Bill, we hope you have a complete recovery of the eyesight.

**DESTROYER ESCORT ASSOC.** Contact: DESA, 352 W. Story Rd., Ocoee, FL. 34761.

George Milk, 449 St. James St., Port Charlotte, 33952, 813 627-6759 area meets at the Golden Corral-PUNTA GORDA, FL. on the 3rd Tues. at 1:30

P.M. When vacationing, join in with these Florida Crews.

**MID-FLORIDA CHAPTER CONTACT:** Jack and Corinne Renaud, 839 So. Success Ave., Lakeland, FL. 33801, 941-688-1312, assisted by: SAM AND DOLLY MORRIS, 2055 S. FLORAL AVE., LOT 221, BARTOW, FL. 33830, 941-533-4891.

Rudy and Ellie Kozak, 4950 Dory Dr., NEW PORT RICHEY, FL. 34652, 813-847-4038; and Harold Ceaser, 8621 Vixen Ln., Port Richey, FL. 34668, 813-863-1367 notifies us that the FLORIDA NATURE COAST ARMED GUARD meets on Wednesday for LUNCH at "KALLEY K's" Restaurant located on Hwy 19 in New Port Richey. Contact Rudy. Everyone is WELCOMED!!

**SPRINGHILL, FLORIDA AREA** Contact: William T. Young, 4206 Parkhurst La., Springhill, FL. 34608, 904-683-9333 for a breakfast on the "Second" Saturday at 10 AM at the EVERGREEN WOODS RETIREMENT COMMUNITY.

**PORT ST. LUCIE, FL.** area meets on the "LAST FRIDAY IN THE MONTH" at JOHNNY'S CORNER FAMILY RESTAURANT, 7180 U.S. #1, PORT ST. LUCIE 34952, 407-878-2686 with host DICK JARMAN, 1461 MERION CT. SE, PORT ST. LUCIE, FL. 34952, 407-335-3716. THEY WELCOME all "Y'ALL"!

**SANFORD, FL. AREA:** FRED AND MARGARET FONTAINE, 2537 MOHAWK DR., SANFORD, FL. 32773, 407-323-7410, HOLD A MEETING ON THE 2ND SUNDAY AT 1 P.M. AT THE AMERICAN LEGION HALL ON SANFORD AVE., SANFORD, FLA.

**MESA, ARIZONA HOSTS** are Clarence and Marilyn Halpny, 1180 S. Starr St., Apache Junction, Az. 85219, 602-983-5212. THEY MEET AT THE "RED MOUNTAIN STEAKHOUSE" in Mesa on the "FIRST THURSDAY" of the month at 11 A.M. Assisting is Adele Traficano, 108 N. Greenfield Road, Apt-2117, Mesa, Az. 85205, 602-396-6233.

The **TUCSON, AZ.** Area hosts are William and Marion Howard, 4056 N. Tuttle St., Tucson, Az. 85705, 602-887-8703 for the LAST "FRIDAY" of each Mo. meeting at 11 AM at the VILLAGE INN, 6251 N. ORECLE RD., TUCSON, Az. 85704, 602-297-2180.

**PBY CATALINA INTERNATIONAL ASSOC.** CONTACT: James Thompson,

1510 Kabel Dr., New Orleans, La. 70131-3632, 504-392-1227.

**PUGET SOUND CHAPTER OF M.M. VETERANS** contact James Colamarino, 2904 168th S.E., Bellevue, Wa. 98008, (206) 746-6984. All Armed Guard are WELCOMED!! A GREAT CREW!!

**LCI NATIONAL ASSOC. EDITOR** ROBERT KIRSCH, 643 CALLERY RD., EVANS CITY, PA. 16033, 412-538-8151 INFORMS US THAT THEY'LL HOLD THEIR NATIONAL REUNION 4/23-27/97 in CHERRY HILL, N.J.

**USS LCS(L) SHIPS 1 THRU 130 NATIONAL ASSOC. REUNION** WILL BE HELD AT THE CLARION HOTEL, ORLANDO, FL. 8/13-17/1997. CONTACT "JEFF" JEFFERS, P.O. BOX 9087, WAUKEGAN, IL 60079, 847-360-0560.

Contact: Joe Piccolini, 9724 Paseo De Oro, Cypress, Ca. 90630, 213-598-8326; Charles Savonna, 8777 Coral Springs Crt. G-9, Huntington Beach, Ca. 92646, 714-960-6925; or, Thom Hendrickson, 1531 S. Pomona-Apt-A-30, Fullerton, Ca. 92632, about the **LANE (V)**. They have the guns in firing order!!

**SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA REGION-SAN DIEGO** plan to meet "EVERY TWO MONTHS" at 11:00 from 1/11/1997 at the "BAYVIEW CLUB", MCRD, San Diego, Ca. Hosts are: Howard Wooten, 772 E. Vista Way #B, Vista, Ca. 92084 (619) 724-7871; Joe Zapotocky, 1846 Warmsland, Vista, Ca. 92084 and George Kost, 3609 Belle Bonnie Brae, Bonita, Ca. 92084 (619) 267-5797.

**LSM ASSOCIATION** Contact: Richard Schatz, 66 Summer St., Greenfield, Ma. 01301.

**TEXAS MERCHANT MARINE** meet the 2nd Wednesday of each month at LUBY's Cafeteria, 2233 W. North Loop, Austin Tx., 11 A.M. Contact Chas. Smith, 404 North Water St., Burnett, Tx 78611-2451, 512-756-9853. All Armed Guard and Merchant Seamen are welcomed at the Ol'Corral!! Contact: Bob Thompson, 6300 Hillcroft, Ste. 260, Houston, Tx. 77081, 713-665-1276, Fax-713-270-8531 for that area.

**DAKOTAS!!** Verne and Evelyn Barrett, 255 TEXAS ST., #H-226 Rapid City, S.D. 57701, 605-343-4171 have a 2ND Wednesday 8. A.M. meeting at "TALLY'S" across from the ALEX JOHNSON HOTEL in RAPID CITY, S.D.



**THE LAS VEGAS AREA CREW** meets on the first (1st) Tuesday of each month at the "COUNTRY INN" on SUNSET ROAD in Henderson, Nevada for 1:00 P.M. Lunch. Contact: Merv Yarbrough, 7920 W. Wigman Ave., Las Vegas, NV 89113, 702-361-6817 or 565-4022.

**STATESVILLE N.C. AREA** meets the 1ST TUESDAY-8. A.M. at SHONEY'S "SIGNAL HILL MALL." CONTACT: K.E. Watt, 2967 Wilksboro Highway, Statesville, N.C. 28667-9242, Tel. 910-876-0650. Sez, "ALL Y'ALL COME ON."

**CHINA COASTERS CHAPTER of AMMVWWII** CONTACT: Floyd (RED) Hayes, 4501 W. 141st ST., Hawthorne, Ca. 90250, 310-679-2107.

**GULFPORT, MS AREA-CONTACT** Host John Foretich, 310-44th St., Gulfport, Ms. 39507, 601-868-2551 for information on future meetings.

"GRIFFIN'S RESTAURANT" BEHIND RED LOBSTER WHERE WE USED TO MEET. (IN THE QUILT ROOM) Under new management!! **THE RALEIGH, N.C.** Armed Guard still meets on the FIRST (1st) Saturday of the month at 8:00-10:30 A.M. at GRIFFIN'S RESTAURANT. Take I-440 around to the NORTH SIDE and take EXIT 10 NORTH to 4500 Wake Forest Rd.; onto 1604 N. Market Dr. See sign on right. It's behind the Red Lobster. (CAL)

**TINCAN SAILORS, INC.** Of NJ Contact Vince Diomede, 20 Admirals Row, Freehold, N.J. 07728, 908-308-0071 about their 17th Annual BULL SESSION, Sat. 3/22/97, Holiday Inn Center Point, Jamesburg, NJ

**PATROL CRAFTS SAILORS ASSOC-(PSCA)** Contact: Joe Kelliher, Hold 14, Hickory Hills, Southington. Ct. 06489 for Reunions.

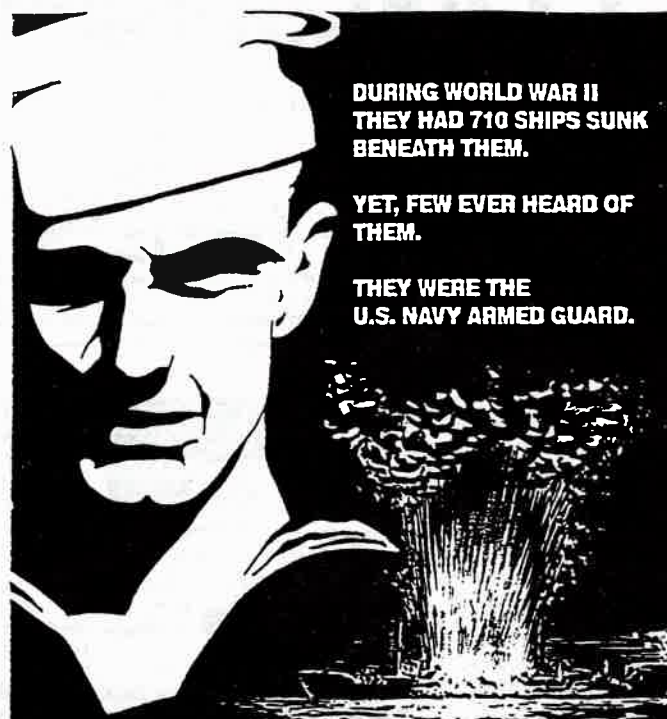
**U.S.N. CRUISER SAILORS ASSOC.** Contact: Ray Snapp, 3705 Heatherwood Dr., Tipp City, Oh. 45371, 513-339-3217.

**MIDWEST CHAPTER MERCHANT MARINE** will be host to the 11th NATIONAL CONVENTION, JUNE 4-7, 1997, at the RAMADA/O'HARE HOTEL, 6600 N. Mannheim Rd., Rosemont, IL. Contact Casey Jesukaitis, 3312 W. 61st St., Chicago, IL 60629, 773-925-3875 for more info. All Armed Guard and Merchant Marine are most welcomed.

**NEW!! WEST VIRGINIA GROUP** will meet on 5-17-97 at the Jane Lew Truck Stop Conference Room, off I-79 at Exit 105 to discuss future meetings. Contact Paul Bennett, Route 2, Box 29, Jane Lew, W.Va. 26378, (304) 884-7536, or Forrest Flanagan, P.O. Box 119, Craigsville, W.Va. 26205, (304) 742-3160.

\*\*\*\*\*

**MISS ANY MORE? LET ME KNOW NOW! Please send me any corrections as to time or date changes too!! IT IS THE ONLY WAY I CAN CORRECT MY ERRORS. (CALLOYD)**



**DURING WORLD WAR II  
THEY HAD 710 SHIPS SUNK  
BENEATH THEM.**

**YET, FEW EVER HEARD OF  
THEM.**

**THEY WERE THE  
U.S. NAVY ARMED GUARD.**

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WILL GO TO NAVY ARMED GUARD  
WWII VETERANS ASSOCIATION.**

## ARMED GUARD COOKBOOKS

Armed Guard Cookbooks are still on sale for \$13.00. Order them from Richard and Billie Kohse, 2304 Lister Rd., Olympia, Wa. 98506.



# LONGING for RESPECT

## Merchant Marines, the unsung service, giving Uncle Sam a nudge

By MICHAEL P. MAYKO  
Staff writer

During World War II, Uncle Sam called out for the Merchant Marines. But when the war ended, he forgot about them.

He forgot about the 215,000 men who risked their lives aboard rickety old boats and hastily built new ones to deliver supplies and ammunition to em-



Harold, was killed during the Battle of the Bulge be-

battled troops and beleaguered nations.

"I crossed the Atlantic Ocean 32 times and the Pacific once," said George Viollette of Lisbon, now assistant director of the Maritime Merchant Marines New England Chapter. "My brother,

cause they ran out of ammunition. I took this job seriously."

In the eyes of Lisbon and others, Uncle Sam forgot about the 6,795 Merchant Marines who died horrible deaths, including 54 from Connecticut. About

See MERCHANT on A14

■ Memorial Day parades in the region. / A2

the 700 who became POWs. About the thousands who were disabled, yet received no free medical care and no pension.

"We all felt so bad about that," said 76-year-old John J. Russo of Norwalk, who survived two Japanese bombing attacks on the way to New Guinea. "Many of us saw more action than a lot of servicemen."

With Monday being Memorial Day, veterans pause this weekend to look back at their military experience. But Merchant Marines are still fighting — for respect.

Today, textbooks offer little mention of their exploits. Congress uses different standards to assess their veterans status than it does other servicemen and women. The Veterans of Foreign Wars still prohibits their membership.

The argument is that they were not really in the military, that they were well-paid hired hands aboard, for the most part, privately-owned cargo vessels.

Supporters call the contributions vital. "Their role was a complete necessity," said Donald Oullette, of the Veterans' Affairs office in Bridgeport and a World War II Navy veteran. "The Navy ships were not supply ships. Who else could bring the materials we needed to win the war overseas? Oh my gosh, the numbers they lost. The terrible ways they died."

Uncle Sam had no second thoughts about sending Merchant Marines on missions through raging storms and submarine ambushes.

"We were considered expendable," said Warren Fielding of Simsbury, who joined at age 19. German subs "would be sinking us as soon as we got out of New York Harbor." In the first three months of 1942, over 1,000 Merchant Marines were killed in torpedo attacks along the East Coast.

The only onboard protection came from a few guns manned by the Navy Armed Guard — consisting of teens like Joseph Dulka, an Ansonia native who now lives in Windsor Locks.

"At 17, you want to be a hero; you think you can win the war singlehandedly," said Dulka, who spent just four weeks at gunnery school before shipping out. "When the Navy told us if we joined the Armed Guard we could ship out right away, we jumped at the chance. We really didn't know what we were getting into."

He quickly found out. Aboard ship, one minute it would be calm, "nothing but you and the ocean," said Dulka. The next



DUKLA

minute he would hear a whoosh, a sizzle and a pop — enemy flares lighting up the night.

Enemy bombers would swoop out of the sky, aiming their deadly loads at fuel-carrying tankers before

strafing adjacent ships. Survive that, and seamen still had to worry about those subs.

Roughly 730 Merchant Marine vessels were sunk. Many on board were burned alive. Those who leaped overboard were ravaged by sharks. Those who made it into lifeboats were picked off by enemy machine gunners. Yet when the war ended those lucky enough to survive received no veteran's benefits.

For Stratford's Patrick Mineo, this meant no continuing his electrical engineering studies at Northeastern University. Unlike his service buddies, Lisbon's Viollette did not qualify for a low-interest mortgage. And the only thanks John D'Auria of Milford got for twice being aboard torpedoed ships was medals from the Russian government.

"It took the government 43 years to recognize the Merchant Marines," said Francis Coughlin of New Canaan, who became a chest surgeon and then a lawyer following his service. "And still today, many of us are not recognized."

In 1988, a federal court granted veteran status to Merchant Marines. But the government decided to offer benefits only to those who could document service on a ship between Dec. 7, 1941, and Aug. 15, 1945. In contrast, Army, Navy and Marine veterans had a Dec. 31, 1946, cut-off date.

Qualified Merchant Marines were entitled to be treated at veterans' hospitals; apply for low-interest loans; receive tax exemptions; and be buried in a military cemetery with honors.

But few in the region have taken advantage of the new benefits. "We're at the end of our lives," explained Coughlin. "Recognition was so controversial and so long in coming, that a lot lost heart."

At 69, Coughlin still has the energy to press Congress to extend the benefits cut-off date to Dec. 31, 1946.

He was kept out of the regular military by his near-sightedness. The Merchant Marines, he said, were "the only way I



MINEO

he said. Even with the war over, "there were still dangers. The seas we traveled through were mined. We'd shoot at them with rifles."

Today, Coughlin wants recognition for himself and the 2,000 others barred from veterans status. "What's it going to cost the government? We're too old to go to college or start a business. We already qualify for Medicare. All we want is the opportunity to be buried with a flag on our coffin."

In 1992, Coughlin testified before a congressional committee. He was surprised by the animosity directed at the Merchant Marines, especially by an Arizona congressman. "Basically, he said we were drunks, draft-dodgers and disabled," recalled Coughlin.

In addition, Merchant Marines are still barred from VFW membership.

"Our bylaws require that you have to have been honorably discharged from the American military and received a campaign service medal," said Steven Van Buskirk, a national VFW spokesman. To allow the Merchant Marines in, the VFW would have to amend its bylaws. "The issue comes up just about every year, but it seems there's not enough [support] to go to bat for the Merchant Marines."

Even Van Buskirk agrees that the Merchant Marines' function "was not altogether different from the Navy. Their records are distinguished."

Some blame wartime columnists Walter Winchell and Westbrook Pegler for breeding ill will. Both accused the seamen of earning large sums, sabotaging their ships and playing into the hands of a communist labor union.

"All that's crazy," said Angelo Guzzi, 84, of Bridgeport. "They felt we were making a ton of money, that we were all rich. I was 32 with two young children at home making \$42 a month." Guzzi, who later became head of the Connecticut Gasoline Dealers Association, spent his



FIELDING

Patrick Mineo said for those who sailed through war zones, pay topped out at about \$125 a month. Mineo also denied critics' claims that Merchant Marines got to be choosy about their assignments.

"If I stayed off a ship more than a month, I was subject to the draft," he said. "They never told us where we were going. They felt if the fellows knew we were leaving on a Murmansk run, they'd abandon ship."

For Merchant Marines, the Murmansk run is legendary.

Mineo used to make it. So did John D'Auria. Both were given medals by the Russian government for helping deliver supplies to Russia. Ninety-seven ships that set out to make the Murmansk run — including many leaky Liberty ships that were being built at the rate of one a week — never came back.

The U.S. ships would leave the East Coast loaded with ammunition, tanks, planes, food, clothing, and medicine and join a convoy in Nova Scotia. When they reached Scotland, a British escort would join for the journey to Russia.

But the Scandinavian coastline was crawling with German subs. Traveling at just 8 knots, the merchant vessels were no match for them. In March 1943, D'Auria, training to be a third mate, was standing watch aboard one of those ships when it was struck by a torpedo.

He rushed to a lifeboat, only to see it capsize and dump the crew into the path of the ship's propellers. "There was no chance to do anything except turn away ... you didn't want to see them get all cut up."

D'Auria and others boarded a second lifeboat, only to discover it was damaged. The seamen managed to keep it afloat by bailing water for half an hour, until a passing trawler picked them up.

D'Auria relived the experience a year later. He was on the deck talking to the second engineer when a torpedo hit.

"I'll never forget it," he said. "It was a bright Sunday afternoon about 1 p.m. The blast knocked him overboard. I never saw him again."



# SERMON NOTES... LETTERS FROM OUR MEMBERS

Dear Mr. Lloyd: November 26, 1996

Your name and address as contact for the Naval Armed Guard Association were in the current issue of the Naval Mine Warfare Association's publication, "SILENT DEFENDER." I am writing to see if you may be able to put me in touch with any U.S. Navy Armed Guard who played a very important role in my life.

In September, 1945, I was an Electrician's Mate 2/C aboard a tiny wooden mine sweeper, the USS YMS-421. Because of the state-of-the-art in weather forecasting and communications of the time, the 421 was caught in a typhoon off Okinawa without much fuel. The 421 rode the huge waves stoutly until the fuel shortage forced reduction in speed and the little ship was smashed and sunk. Twenty eight of the thirty two crewmen survived the sinking.

Two others, and I, were together in the water over twenty-four hours in life jackets, clinging to a piece of driftwood. We were first battered by the waves and when the storm abated somewhat, the sun appeared and beat down on us. We could not have lasted much longer. Looking off, we saw what we thought to be masts coming in our direction. We began paddling toward a spot where we thought the ship would pass nearest us but as it came nearer, we could see that we would not be able to get very close to it. Mustering our strength, we began yelling and waving clothing.

Should this writer live to be a hundred, he will never forget that moment. A signal light aboard the ship, the S.S. McMURRAY VICTORY, blinked at us! "THANK GOD THEY HAD SEEN US!" The ship's horn sounded and it lost way. Despite the high waves, a small boat was put over the side to pick us up! The ordeal was over because a Navy Armed Guardsman on lookout watch had been told to keep a "SHARP-EYE-OUT" for possible survivors in the water, and he indeed did that!

The young man who spotted us came to see us when we were on the McMURRAY (V). In my condition, I could not remember his name, but as years passed, he has never been far from my thoughts. I have often wondered who he was and what has become of him, this fellow who was so very important in the lives of three shipwrecked sailors. I would like to ask you if you could tell me from your records if any of your members were aboard the S.S. McMURRAY VICTORY in that era. Perhaps, through them, I might learn who the man is or was. A self-addressed-stamped-envelope is included for your convenience and any assistance you can give me in my search to learn his identity would

certainly be appreciated. Sincerely Yours,  
**James L. Peel, 1260 Meadow Lane,  
Frankfort, Ky, 40601-4574.**

\*\*\*\*\*

*Dear Readers: After reading the above letter, I searched the Ship's File under the S.S. McMURRAY VICTORY and came up with a few names which I immediately sent to shipmate Peel. I will now print his second letter to me. This is why I have been doing what I have to do as long as I can and God gives me strength. calloyd*

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear Charlie: December 15, 1996

After receiving the names and addresses of the three members of U.S. Navy Armed Guard who were on board the S.S. McMURRAY VICTORY in September 1945, I sent a letter to each explaining the purpose of my search, asking their help and including a Self-Addressed-Stamped-Envelope. Unfortunately, one member was deceased and another was there but could not identify the Armed Guard on the lookout watch. When the third envelope came back, I was not too optimistic, but when I opened it, IT WAS THE ONE!!! It was **Andy Bellise, 56 Lockwood Ave., Farmingdale, New York 11735-4509, 516-694-9475!!** I knelt in my kitchen and thanked a kind and merciful God that I finally found the name of the man who had spotted the three of us in the water, over a half a century earlier.

There was no question that it was he!! Enclosed is a copy of two pages from the diary that Andy kept when he was in the Navy on the S.S. McMURRAY VICTORY in a letter to his wife. Therein is his description of the events of September 17, 1945. The three he tells about are Loyd Schunke, MoM2C; Mark Deady, EMC1/C and me.

I called Andy and we had a delightful visit. He is 86 and as bright, lively and witty as you can imagine. We were battered and beaten when we were rescued and could not have lasted much longer had he not spotted us under very difficult visual conditions. I thanked him and told him how often I had thought about him and longed to know who he was. It was his vigilance and attention to duty that in a real sense, gave my companions and me the opportunity to live a while longer on God's Beautiful Green Earth. Andy exemplifies what we mean when we say "SHIPMATE" even if we come from different ships and I look forward to more chats with him.

While I did not serve in the ARMED GUARD, I was certainly a beneficiary of it. So, if you will accept me as an associate member, someone who was one of the worst, and most inapt, hotshellsman ever

born, I would like to become a part of your association. A check is enclosed. Sincerely, Jim Peel.

\*\*\*\*\*

*Dear Crew: Now you know why I have printed Jim Peel's two letters. Now, I will print the photo copy from Bellise to his wife. NOW-FOR THE REST OF THE STORY! calloyd*

\*\*\*\*\*

**At Sea- Outside the Harbor- Monday  
Okinawa, Buckner Bay, Ryukyus Island**  
My Beloved Wife: Sept. 17, 1945

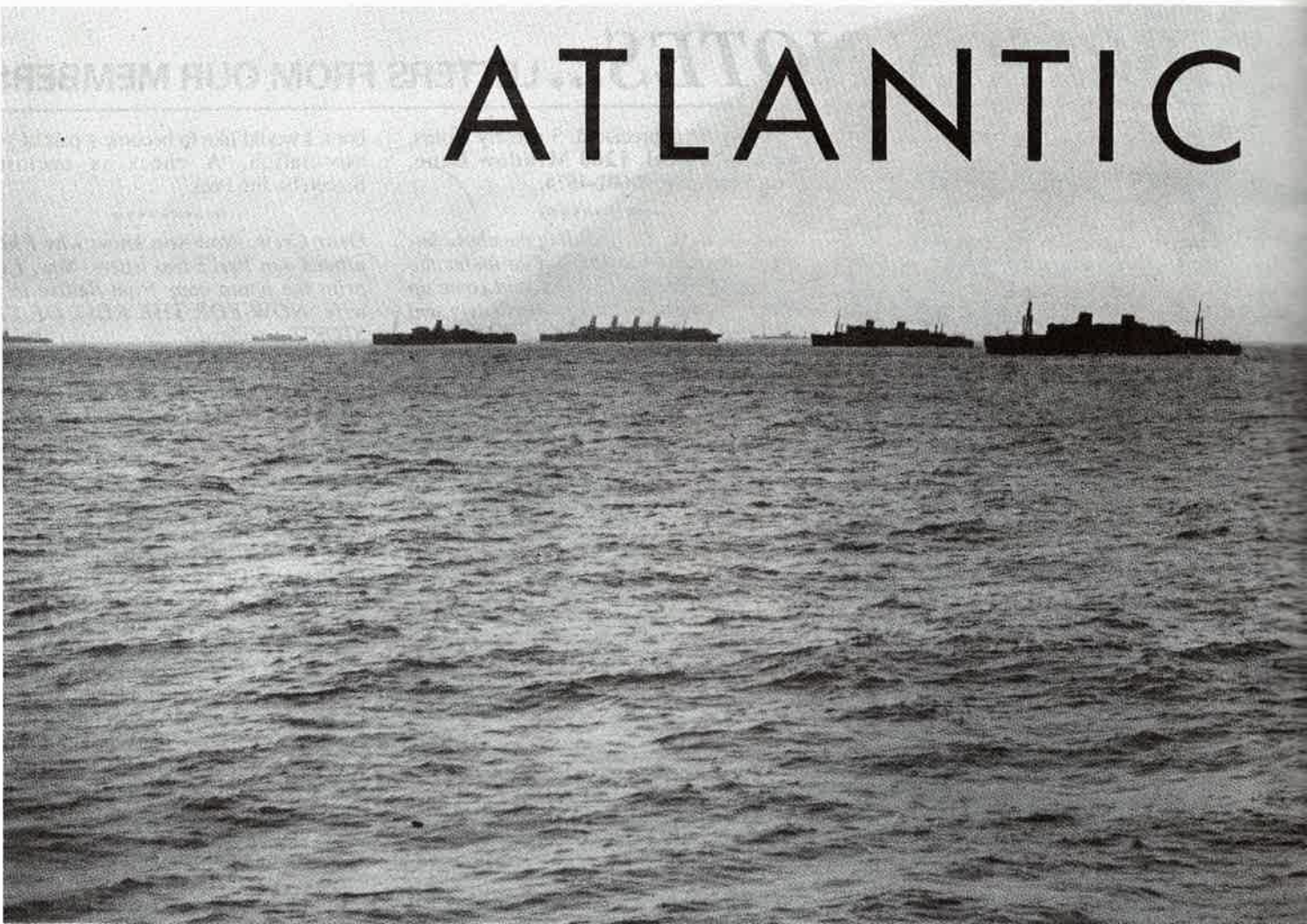
Was woken up at 11:30, washed and had chow, then went on watch at 12:00. We are out to Sea now. They left the harbor at 0800 and it's still pretty rough out but not much wind. The sun is out and it's great to be alive. At 2 P.M., I had the bow watch. I spotted a big driftwood and I saw with my glasses, 3 men hanging on. I called up my man on the bridge and told him what I had seen. He ran down and told our Officer and he told the Captain. The ship turned around and stood nearby. They put the motor launch down, manned by the Merchantmen and they pulled them in. These fellows were pretty well banged up with cuts and bruises but thank God that they were saved. We were told to look out for survivors and floating mines. A few ships went down out here when the heavy swells turned over. When I spotted them, they were about 500 yards on the starboard side. Thank the good Lord that I saw them. These three men were Navy men. They were on a mine-sweeper. It's a small Navy craft and they had a 32 man crew. We got word that the ships in back of us picked up 6 more men. The rest of them, we do not know if any one picked them up or not.

Just think how it turned out. We almost got it going through this typhoon and then go out to sea and save 3 men!! Thank the Blessed Jesus and His Blessed Mother for Their Blessed protection. We are going to stay out to sea until she calms down and then go back into the harbor. They blinked to a Destroyer for a doctor and they got the doctor on board and they took the three men off and right to the hospital where they could get good medical attention.

My Beloved, I'm so happy to be alive and be able to write all this down. Good night my love, pleasant dreams and may the Blessed Jesus bless and protect you. By the way darling, it's a beautiful night. The sea has calmed down; all the stars are out and it's beautiful to be able to see all of this again. I hope and pray that we unload fast and get away from this typhoon area. The typhoons are in season now. They start in July and end in November so I hope we don't get it bad again. I love you, Andy.



# ATLANTIC



TOWARD THE EASTERN HORIZON ROLL THE DREARY, TIRED SHIPS OF THE ATLANTIC CONVOY. THEIR NUMBER USUALLY VARIES FROM ABOUT 20 TO 100. THERE ARE MAMMOTH PASSENGER

## A SECOND FRONT DEPENDS ON IT

From Leningrad to the Volga the Russians staggered back. During a heat wave in Egypt, the British anxiously watched Rommel's Afrika Korps reinforcing itself. In France, Yugoslavia, Greece and Norway, tired people waited for the Allies to do something. The demand for a second front grew more loud and more desperate.

The U. S. and Britain were planning such an attack. But how soon it could be started and whether it would succeed depended on the volume of men and supplies which could be moved from the U. S. to Europe. That meant convoys protected by the

NEAR A LINER HOVERS A NAVY BLIMP LOOKING FOR SUBMARINES. BLIMPS WORK ONLY NEAR THE SHORES OF THE U. S.

CLOSING IN JUST AFTER THE PHOTOGRAPH ABOVE WAS



64





# CONVOY



LINERS, BUILT FOR THE LUXURY TRADE, COASTWISE STEAMERS, DIRTY LITTLE FREIGHTERS AND BIG, OIL-SMEARED TANKERS. CONVOY CAN MOVE ONLY AT SPEED OF THE SLOWEST SHIP

U. S. Navy. Said Lieutenant General Brehon B. Somervell, chief of the Services of Supply, "More troops were sent abroad in the first six months of this war than in the first six months of the last war. But," added the General, "that's not enough."

To war strategists the problems of convoys are highly complex. But to the individual soldier or sailor aboard a ship pounding its way across the Atlantic, the problems of a convoy are intensely personal. There is wind and fog and horizontal rain. There is "general quarters" and a bated breath while depth charges go off. There

is black night on a lonely ocean and the terrifying silver wake of a torpedo. There are German submarines and turquoise-blue and gold sunsets. Sometimes for somebody there is sudden explosion and cold water and a salty death.

For the last four months LIFE Photographer Frank Scherschel has been on Atlantic convoy duty with the U. S. Fleet. He has come to know brave men and brave ships. In the pictures here, selected from hundreds taken on two separate trips to two different Atlantic ports, he has captured much of the tense feel of convoy life.

TAKEN, A CHILLING FOG HIDES THE SHIPS OF THE CONVOY EVENING OVER THE ATLANTIC. IN CLOUD BANK, SUN SETS BLUE AND RED AND GOLD. BUT TOMORROW MAY BE STORMY



CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE 65



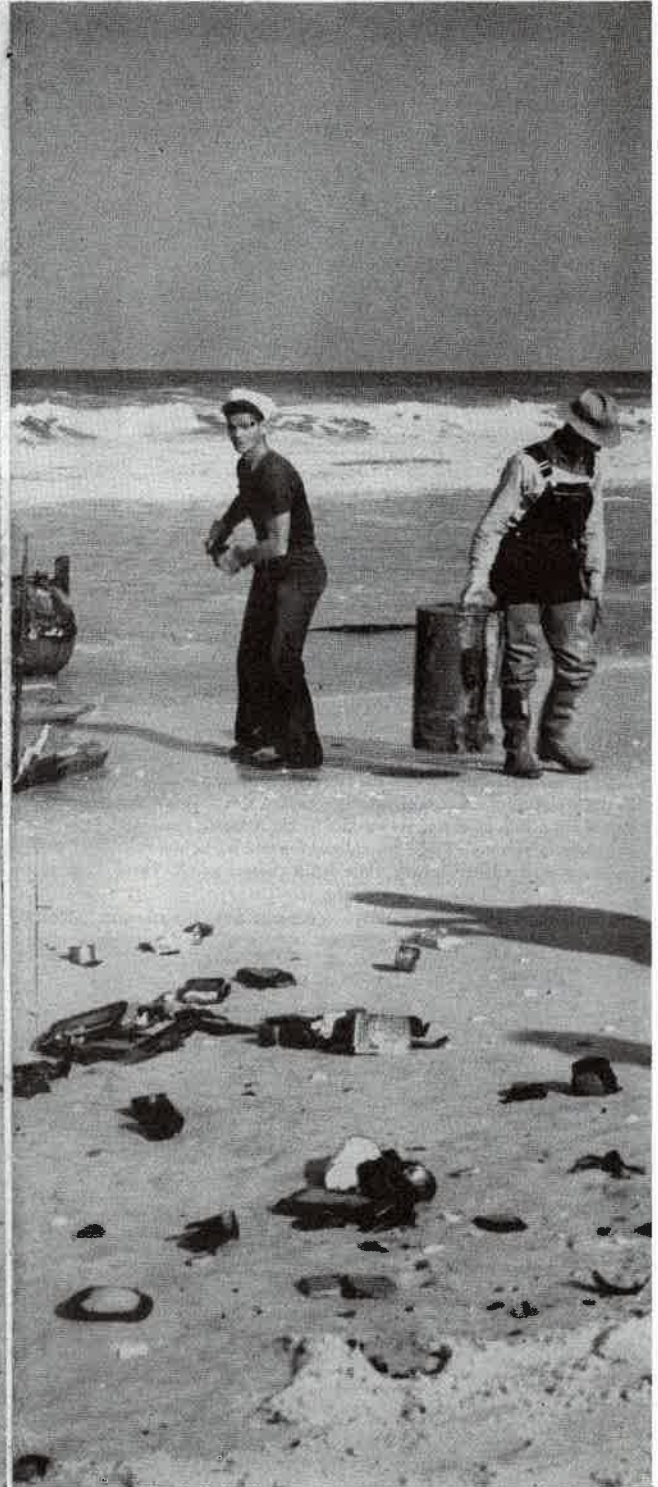
# WAR JETSAM

Souvenir seekers scour beaches along Atlantic picking up wreckage of ships sunk by U-boats

Vacationers who used to spend their summers along the Atlantic beaches searching for pretty sea shells have a very different game this summer. They are scouring the sands all the way from Florida to Maine picking up jetsam washed in from sunken ships. The variety of their grim souvenirs is wonderful—oilcans, lifeboats, gangplanks, shattered timbers, waterlogged cargoes. This souvenir game is played as a race between Coast Guard and Navy and plain civilians. Coast Guard and Navy want the jetsam to keep track of sunken ships. People want it to show off to friends. Whoever gets to wreckage first takes it, with the Navy reserving the right to commandeer any it needs. If nobody gets to wreckage in time, the tides wash it away.

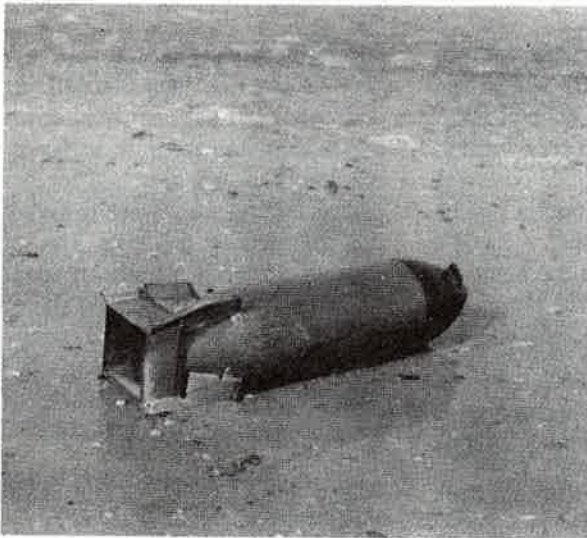


A big life raft washes ashore on a flat Florida beach. Strown on the sands are the raft's emergency provisions—dehydrated foods, malted-milk tablets, dextrose. Navy



men are moving it away, picking up parts which identify this raft as having come from a tanker. Navy and Coast Guard have hands full keeping track of the wreckage.

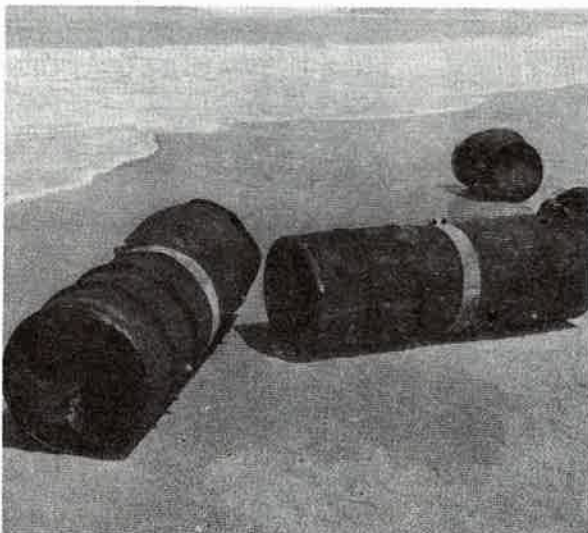




**A flare**, dropped by coastal patrol plane at night to light up the waters, sits on the sand. Flares are considered choice items by jetsam collectors who think they are bombs.



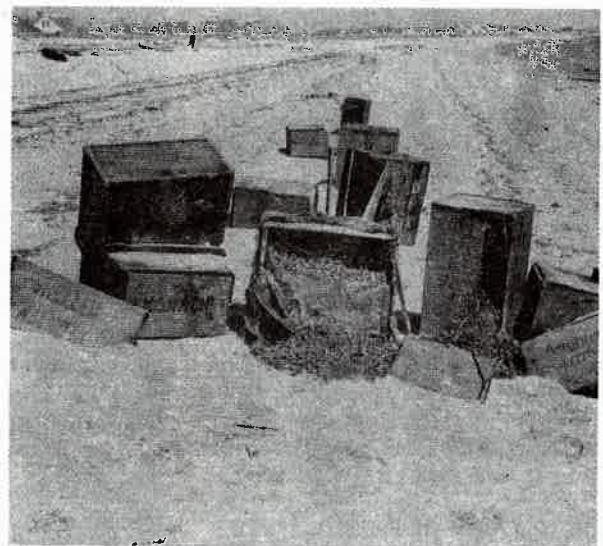
**A gangplank** was discovered by a Florida charter boat captain bobbing about offshore. He towed it in, hauled it home, proudly keeps it on display in his front yard.



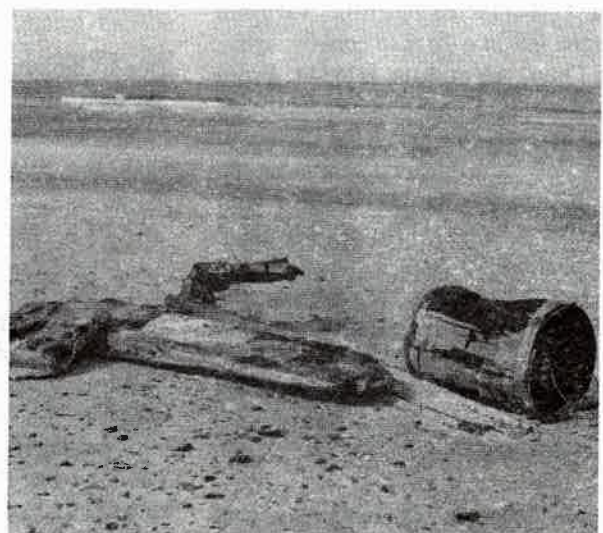
**Life-raft pontoons** show signs of having been subjected to terrific heat. The big blisters on the sides indicate that the pontoons may have come from a torpedoed oil tanker.



**A big lifeboat**, surrounded by timbers and bits of wreckage, is stranded on the rocks 20 miles south of St. Augustine. Somewhere in the disaster the boat's side was stove in.



**A cargo of walnuts** sent from India—where they had been carefully shelled—to Toronto via New York comes to a soggy end in front of summer cottages on Cape Cod.



**A burned lifebelt**, a battered oilcan and a piece of ship's timber lie together on a shell-strewn Southern strand. Florida beaches have been especially rich in wreckage.

# THE ARMED GUARD AT ANZIO

*Ralph Lucas, 1220 Hawthorne Rd, Hanahan, S.C. (one of our computer men that I send backups to) had compiled a list of ships that were at Anzio from Jan. 22, 1944 until Jan. 31, 1944 which I just located under the garage. They were as follows: (all S.S.) Bret Harte; Hilary Herbert; John Banvard; Lawton B. Evans; Alexander Martin; Samuel Huntington; Tabithia Brown; Henry Middleton; Elihu Yale; Richard Bassett; John Walker; Edward Rutledge; Charles Goodyear; David Terry; John Murray Forbes; John M. Wayne and the Zane Grey. Very little has been said in any article about the U.S. Naval Armed Guard and Merchant Seamen who took part at Anzio. I have many of you listed and if you want an officer's report from any of the above ships, please send a "SELF-ADDRESSED-STAMPED-ENVELOPE" to the POINTER (return address on the outside of the POINTER) and I will send you a copy when time is available. Please note: Included in the info was a list of the crew of the S.S. Bret Harte. I searched through the computer, searched the telephone CD-ROM in the northeast only for names similar to them and sent out cards to ones pulled up. I have now located three of them. calloyd*

## S.S. ELIHU YALE

### Sunk 2/15/44 at Anzio, Italy

The S.S. ELIHU YALE left New York harbor 12/14/43 for Norfolk, Virginia where she left in a 70 ship convoy, arriving in Oran, Algeria on 1/11/44. From there, she sailed to Augusta, Sicily on 2/3/44 and on the 8th, she sailed to Naples, Italy. She departed Naples on the 12th, arriving at Anzio on 2/13/44 with 40 U.S. Navy Armed Guard, 45 Merchant Seamen and 180 Army Personnel on board to discharge the cargo. From the time she arrived at the Beachhead at 0840 on the 13th, to the time she was hit, there were frequent air raids and almost a constant shelling of the waters around her by long range coastal guns.

At approx. 1811, Feb.15, 1944 they were notified via radio that an air alert was in progress. This was the 15th or 16th alert since 0900 the same day and it gave the

position of the planes as 8 miles north of Anzio—10 miles north of where the YALE was anchored. The general quarters alarm was rung, the gun crew went to their battlestations, the shore batteries opened fire and at 1812 (about a minute after the alert was received) a terrific explosion shook the ship as the bomb hit the after part of #4 hatch. The bomb was identified by several members of the gun crew as a glider bomb.

The bomb blew up the main deck and folded it back against the after gun platform, carrying with it the aft mast, deck locker and the #7 and #8MM gun tubs — leaving a hole just above the waterline the width of the ship and extending from the midships deckhouse to #5 hatch. At the time, the ship was about 40 percent discharged. Number 4 hold was empty — the other four were partially filled with gasoline, ammunition and some general cargo.

The fire broke out immediately as the fuel oil tanks were ignited and it spread to the LCT loaded with ammunition which was tied on the Port Side aft, discharging the #5 hold. The fire later gutted the entire midships deckhouse. The ship's powerplant was wrecked by the explosion; consequently, it was impossible to get water on deck with which to fight the fire. The #7 20MM was firing at the time the bomb hit and afterwards; several other 20MM guns and the forward 3"50 fired for a minute or two at enemy aircraft until out of range.

Due to the raging fire, the LCT exploding shells in all directions, the danger of a subsequent explosion of the cargo and their inability to fight the fire, it was decided that the ship was to be abandoned in order to save as many lives as possible. The Captain ordered the ship abandoned at approx. 1820. The Navy gun crew stationed amidships and forward were ordered to leave the ship as there were no enemy aircraft over the area and nothing could be done to save the ship. The gunners on the aft gun platforms, who were cut off from the rest of the ship, were ordered by the coxswain to leave the ship because of the exploding ammunition.

The #1 life boat, two large rafts forward

and numerous doughnut rafts were put over the side (the other lifeboats, etc. were destroyed) and the men went down ropes and ladders into them. In so far as possible, the ship was searched for wounded personnel and they were lowered down into the lifeboats and rafts. The ship was finally completely abandoned about 1915, the last person going over the side onto the USS SC-690 which pulled alongside of the starboard bow. The men from all boats and rafts landed at the beach, or were taken aboard "SCs" and "LCTs."

A few hours later, at the request of Captain Turner, British N.O.I.C., the Captain of the S.S. ELIHU YALE, T.W. Ekstrom, three Navy Officers and 8 members of the Merchant Crew returned to the ship and boarded it but could do practically nothing as the fire was still burning in the midships deckhouse. They did secure all confidential publications which were not already destroyed and they were turned over to the Captain of the USS HOPI, a salvage tug which was fighting the fire. These men stayed aboard the HOPI that night and returned back on board the YALE the next morning. The ship was still smoldering and the midship deckhouse was completely gutted. The S.S. ELIHU YALE settled on the bottom in about 35 feet of water and had started to split in half at #4 hatch. They remained on board the HOPI and were later picked up by the British LST-322 as they left Anzio on Feb.17, 1944, arriving in Naples, Italy the next day. They were then taken to Oran and departed there on March 11, 1944 on the USAT GEN. A.E. ANDERSON, arriving at Newport News, Virginia 21 Mar. 44 as reported by Lt(jg) Roger P. Wise, D-V(s), USNR.

The following members of the Armed Guard Unit killed in action were:

Dickson, Edward George	Ser.# 822 36 49
Lea, Garth A., Jr.	306 47 26

The following Armed Guard members were injured and hospitalized in Italy:

Guilford, Robert	249 99 84
Gould, Frederick Albert	805 79 59

Guilford suffered shrapnel wounds in the back and was taken to US Army Hospital



in Naples. Gould was left in an Anzio Hospital with a crushed chest, still unconscious. In addition to the above, Tony Charles Moretti, Cox., USN, 224 52 03 sustained a fractured wrist and Herbert C. Jones, Jr., Ensign, USNR, a punctured eardrum.

The entire gun crew performed their duties extremely well, obeying all commands given to them in regard to both firing and abandoning ship. All of them remained calm throughout the attack and abandoning ship. Due to the suddenness of the attack and lack of good visibility, no planes are claimed to have been hit. Reported by Lt(jg) Roger P. Wise, D-V(S), USNR (3/6/44) Report 014720 at the National Archives, Washington, D.C.

U.S. Merchant Seamen Killed in action: Sundberg, Leonard M. (AB) born-Finland, Wife - Mary Sundberg, Benton, Illinois; Pavelko, Stephen E. (AB) born-USA, Father - Steve Pavelko, Milwaukee, Wisc.; Hart, James B. (Messman) born-USA, Mother - Bertha Hart, Sharpsburg, Ky.

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### **S.S. HENRY MIDDLETON Anzio-Nettuno Action**

At 1515 on 7 Feb. 1944, while anchored 1½ to 2 miles off Red Beach, south of Nettuno, 5 or 6 Focke-Wulf 190's appeared from land over the beach between Red Beach and Nettuno. They were identified as they banked over the beach at about 5000 feet elevation and shore batteries opened fire on them. A few seconds after they banked on the starboard beam of the MIDDLETON, they turned up towards Anzio and the 3"50 fired two rounds at them with 4-sec. fuse, and the 5"38 gun astern fired two rounds at them with 8-sec. fuse. The first round sent from the 3"50 burst among other bursts close to one of the enemy aircraft at the time it was hit and broke up with most of the pieces falling into the water off Red Beach, while the pilot parachuted to land. Several bombs fell into Nettuno, near the beach. The other planes disappeared over land. The MIDDLETON was the nearest to the action. The following message was received by signal after the action from the U.S. Navy Tug No. 71, which was also anchored off Red Beach, which read: "That was a nice shot your

gun crew made this afternoon." The alert had been given at 1500 and the general alarm sounded.

At 0840 on 12 Feb. 1944, while anchored two miles off Nettuno, 10 or 12 Focke-Wulf flew from land over Nettuno, turned up towards Anzio at about 5000 feet and the Middleton's 3"50 fired 3 rounds with 4-sec. fuses within a few seconds as they turned towards Anzio. No hits were observed. At 1805, in the early part of dusk, without previous warnings, while routine smoke laying was in progress, the shore anti-aircraft batteries started firing over the anchorage. The weather was partly overcast with low cloudiness. Almost immediately, aircraft were heard over the anchorage.

At 1815, by which time considerable smoke was around the Middleton, but visibility was still fair, the ship opened fire with all the 20mm that would bear and with the 5"38 gun aft, at a two motored plane which flew from starboard and went off astern at about 2000-3000 feet elevation. A small Naval Escort about 1000 yards inshore from the MIDDLETON fired at the plane a few seconds earlier. The first round from the 5"38 was fired to starboard with an 8-sec. fuse with which the gun was loaded from previous firing. A second round, with a 1.6-sec fuse was fired astern at 60 or 70 degrees elevation and is believed to have been a near miss.

A few minutes later, the 5"38 fired two rounds with 1.6-sec. fuses at another two motored aircraft which flew from starboard to port. The first of these rounds were fired almost directly astern and the second at a bearing of 225 degrees. No action by the plane was observed. A few minutes later, the 5"38 saw another plane fly astern and attempted to fire but the rammer motor failed and hand loading difficulty at the high elevation of the gun prevented firing. Temporary repairs during the action were done but too late to take any action. One of the two aircraft was believed to have released a glider or rocket bomb which was heard whistling overhead from astern and which is believed to have caused a heavy explosion in the water near the MIDDLETON off the port bow. One gunner forward noticed a red glow gliding to the point of this explosion.

A few minutes later, another aircraft was heard flying towards the stern from the starboard quarter. When 300 to 500 yards astern and about 100 feet in elevation, a burst of reddish flame and a reddish glow appeared, apparently from underneath the plane and silhouetted the plane as it banked and flew off on the port quarter. The plane was then identified as having two motors and thought to be a Heinkel 111. Several 20mm guns opened fire at the plane when it was momentarily visible astern. An indistinct object carrying a reddish glow glided rapidly down at an angle of about 45 degrees toward the port side of the ship, followed by heavy 20mm fire from all guns on the port side. It exploded heavily 500-1000 yards on the port side about opposite the stern. Some reported that the explosion was characterized by heavy black smoke, but may have been due to dusk and smoke screen.

During this action, 622 rounds of 20mm was fired. The largest fired by any gun crew was four and one half magazines. The ammunition party working aft functioned well, and several magazines were replaced following the action. There were 82 "RED ALERTS" while the MIDDLETON was at anchorage with many bombs, shellings and whistling noises overhead.

The MIDDLETON's departure from the area came at 0700 on 15 Feb. 1944 during a shelling of the area, spraying the ship with shrapnel but no injuries. At 1220 on 22 Feb. 1944, 16 miles off Cap de Fer, two Liberty ships in the middle of the convoy returning to Oran were torpedoed in quick succession.

With the cooperation of the Master of the ship, sufficient Merchant Crew members of gun crews and ammunition parties were obtained and assigned on the eve of departure for Anzio-Nettuno on 25 Jan. 1994 from Naples Bay. Up until that time, the 5"38 had been somewhat undermanned and only one Merchant Crew member had been assigned to ammunition handling. This report was compiled by Lt(jg) K.F. Bradbury on 1 March 1944.

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*The above two ship's logs will hopefully give you some idea as to what all Armed Guard and Merchant Seamen endured in this theater of conflict. calloyd*

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## ANZIO BEACHHEAD

BY GEORGE MILK

(As told in letter to Ralph Lucas)

I was assigned as Coxswain duty on board the S.S. JOHN WALKER, 10/1/43-7/20/44. We left Norfolk, Virginia in a Convoy to the Mediterranean and on to Naples, Italy. We made three trips to Oran and back to Naples. At Oran, the Army decided to load five Liberty Ships with war supplies, sending them to the Anzio Beachhead. Everything was great until we dropped anchor and then, "ALL HELL" broke loose!! We had air raids and shelling from shore batteries. The Army came on board and told us to get close to shore so the "DUCKS" could help unload us. After a few hours, there was a big bang!! It was a big railroad gun about 10 miles away in a mountain cave shooting at us. The captain rang full speed ahead and the shell landed where we had been. It lifted our stern right out of the water. We went out where the other ships were; then later, went back close to shore. They started unloading us and the railroad gun shot again, the shell landing about 1000 feet short. Shrapnel raked our starboard side, putting holes in the plates and cutting cables; however we managed to stay afloat. Later, the bilge pumps began to work faster. One afternoon, two Nazi planes were flying high overhead, pulling a glider bomb between them, turning it loose where it began circling us. The Chief Engineer thought it was homing in on our generators so he ran below and stopped all motors and generators. As it approached our ship, we started firing at it. One of our 20MM gunners hit the wing and it veered away from our ship. In one of the air raids, as we were firing the 3"50, one of the shells stuck in the barrel. Not having any half shells, we decided to make one. We loaded it into the gun and fired, and it cleared the barrel so we were back in business. Every night as darkness fell, the Nazis came in with a plane to bomb us. We only had a couple of escorts circling us, laying a smoke screen. Not being able to see us, the bomb hit gas and ammunition dumps on the shoreline. After one week there, we sailed back to Naples and home. **George Milk, 449 St. James St., Port Charlotte, FL 33952, (813) 627-6759.**

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## Report of the Voyage of the S.S. DAVID S. TERRY

13 Jan. 1944 to 16 Mar. 1944

Charles J. Taussig, D-V(S)

A) Type of vessel Liberty type of cargo bombs, oil, Army trucks. Owner of vessel U.S. Maritime Commission. Chartered to United Fruit Company.

B) Port of departure Taranto, Italy date 17 January 1944. Convoyed or independent convoyed. Speed (aver.) 8K. No. of ships in convoy variable. No. of escort vessels variable. Port of arrival Bari, Italy date 21 January 1944.

We arrived at Taranto, Italy, at 1130, on 13 January 1944 from Norfolk, Virginia, via Port Augusta, Sicily. Our departure from the United States was on 15 December 1943. Upon request of the Naval Liaison Officer at Taranto, a voyage report was submitted covering this part of the voyage. On 17 January 1944, we departed from Taranto, Italy, and arrived in Brindisi, Italy, the morning of 19 January 1944. We remained at anchor there until the morning of 21 January 1944, when we left for Bari, Italy, accompanied by one small escort vessel and another Liberty ship, arriving there at 1707 that evening. The only event of interest was the destruction of a floating mine by the escort vessel after its presence had been reported to them by us. During our stay in Bari, we drew some medical supplies from the British Army and some 20mm parts from the DEMS. I attended the Convoy Conference on 2 February 1944, and we departed from Bari the following morning, arriving at Port Augusta, Sicily, the afternoon of 5 February 1944. We departed from Port Augusta the afternoon of 9 February 1944 with some fifteen other ships, and joined a large convoy, arriving at Tunis the afternoon of 12 February 1944. We left Tunis the following morning and arrived at Bizerte at noon, where we loaded 2300 tons of cargo, mostly ammunition. During our stay in Bizerte all members of the Navy Gun Crew as well as some twelve members of the Merchant Marine Crew attending the DEMS Anti-aircraft refresher course. We departed from Bizerte the afternoon of 18 February 1944 and arrived at Naples the morning of 20 February

1944. We left there just before midnight the same day, arriving at Anzio Beachhead at 1335 on 21 February 1944.

C) Our first air-raid alert at Anzio was at 1300, 35 minutes before our arrival. During the next ten days we had 53 more alerts in which enemy planes were sighted on about 18 separate occasions mostly during hours of darkness. On all but five of these attacks shore installations were their targets. Shipping at the Beachhead was attacked five times during our stay there, the nights of 21, 25 and 29 February 1944 and the mornings of 22 and 27 February 1944. On the night of 21-22 February there were six attacks between 1900 and 0700 in the morning. The shore batteries opened fire on all these occasions. Flares were dropped by the enemy at 2130, but we did not open fire until 0715 when we expended 5 rounds of 3"50 ammunition and 135 rounds of 20mm ammunition. Orders had been given to gun captains and 20mm gunners not to fire during hours of darkness unless they actually saw targets. This was done in an effort to minimize the chances of our disclosing our position needlessly. At 1800 on the night of 25 February 1944 a small vessel believed to be an LCI which was laying a smoke screen about three hundred yards off our port bow was struck by a bomb and immediately sunk. Due to the combination of smoke and darkness we did not see the plane but clearly heard it overhead. At 0830 on 22 February 1944 two rounds were fired by the 3"50 at an enemy plane some four thousand yards away after the escort ships and other ships in the anchorage had opened fire at this target. The plane got away. The heaviest attack came the night of 29 February 1944 when we were at battle stations from 2005 until 2255. The actual attack was from 2130 to 2230. During this hour we fired 305 rounds of 20mm ammunition and 4 rounds of 3"50 ammunition. At no time did it appear there were more than three or four planes overhead. Whether the same planes kept coming back or whether different planes flew over the ships at anchorage during this hour is uncertain due to the lack of visibility and the fact that most of the time we heard but did not see the enemy due to darkness and smoke screen. On every occasion the enemy seemed to come over the length of our ship rather than across our beam. From limited observations made we believed the attacks to come from medium-sized bombers flying anywhere from mast-



level height to five hundred feet. We scored a probable hit on a plane believed to be a Dornier 217 at mast-level height with the 3"50 gun at a range of about six hundred yards. At the time the area around the ship was brightly illuminated by flares and the plane was seen diving toward the water from a height of 50 feet, but passed out of our range of vision when it left the illuminated area and emerged into the darkness. During this 60 minute attack 40 to 50 bombs were dropped on the ships in anchorage of which some 15 or 20 landed in our immediate vicinity. There were no casualties to any ships in the harbor during this attack thanks to the effectiveness of the smoke screen laid by the escorts. During our stay at Anzio we were frequently under enemy artillery fire, and pieces of flak as large as a man's fist fell on the deck. The only casualty suffered was the breaking of the collar which protects the adjustment screws on the 5"51 gunsight by flak from a German shore battery. The nose of a German 5 or 6 inch projectile in a well-preserved condition was retrieved from the main deck and turned over to Intelligence upon our arrival in Naples.

**D)** Due to the frequency with which we were receiving air-raid alerts at Anzio, it was found after a day or two that the number of Merchant Marine men who responded to the General Alarm was constantly decreasing. This was brought to the attention of the Master and he promptly sent a notice to every member of his crew who had been assigned to gun stations, informing them that they would be logged if they did not answer the General Alarm; subsequently two men were logged – one for seventy-five dollars and the other for forty-five dollars. We had no further trouble on this score.

**E)** The conduct of the entire Armed Guard Crew was exemplary throughout our stay in Anzio. With such a high standard of conduct and devotion to duty, it is difficult to pick out any outstanding men, but, however, I would like to make note of the work of Edward B. Kovacevich, GM3c who supervises the maintenance of our 20mm guns. Upon two separate occasions the night of 29 February 1944 while bombs were falling all around the ship, he went to 20mm guns which had been jammed and in a minimum of time assisted the gunners in having them back in action again; and also the presence of mind of S. L. Herranen and Coye Vanover, 20mm gunners at guns No. 1 and No. 7 respectively, who during the

night of 29 February 1944, while we were in action, shot down two flares which were descending very close to our ship, thus greatly reducing the period of time in which they were effective.

**F)** Our departure from Anzio was at 1815 on 2 March 1944 and we arrived in Naples the following morning. Bad weather caused us to lose four days at the beachhead as the water was too rough for the landing craft to discharge cargo. Further delays in our unloading were caused by German shore batteries which caused much loss of time by forcing us to frequently change our anchorage in an attempt to get out of range and by the affect it had on the soldiers who were discharging our cargo. However, the biggest delay was due to insufficient landing craft. In Naples we discharged some 60 tons of timber which were not taken off the ship at Anzio and also 194 officers and enlisted men of the Transportation Corps who discharged our ship at Anzio. We left Naples in a convoy of 28 ships at 0800 on 8 March 1944 and arrived at port Augusta, Sicily, the following day at 1222. On 10 March 1944 at 1708 we departed from Port Augusta with 42 other ships, joining a west-bound convoy of about the same size the following morning. The speed of the convoy was set for 7½ K but due to rough weather and strong head winds a much slower average was maintained. Our arrival at Oran was at 0950 on 16 March 1944.

**G)** The cooperation of the Master and other officers of the ship was quite satisfactory. The merchant and navy crews got along harmoniously. The ship was infested with cockroaches and other insects throughout the voyage. Uncleanliness in the galley and chow halls was probably responsible for this condition. The quality of the food was quite high, the manner in which it was served and the variety left much to be desired. Variety was often obtained by calling the same vegetable or meat different names in the menu, thus spinach was spinach one meal, collard greens the next, and turnip greens the following meal. Food was frequently served cold. Roaches were often discovered on plates. Some of the ship's officers who have been to sea for many years state this is the worst feeding ship they have ever been on and intend making this their last trip on the subject ship. All of the Navy crew who have been to sea before concur in this opinion of the chow. The bread was such a quality that many of us never ate it. The Steward attributed this first to stale flour

and later to inferior yeast. He seemed infinitely more zealous in his desire to present a low feeding cost to the Company than to serve good food and did so state. During the early part of the voyage the quality of our chow was discussed with the Master and there was a perceptible improvement for perhaps a week. When Navy men get up from the table hungry not because of the lack of food but because of its distastefulness, there is quite definitely something radically wrong.

**H)** The Commercial Radio Operator appeared to carry out war time radio instructions for merchant vessels, and the Master and Officers of the ship carried out 'War Time Instructions for United States Merchant Vessels.' Masthead and sidelights were shown only on order by the Commodore.

**I)** It is imperative that the following defects and deficiencies in our equipment be remedied as soon as possible:

- 1) Replacement of the 5"51 by a dual purpose gun.
- 2) In the event the above is not carried out it is recommended that a new ready box be installed at the 5"51, designed to store fused ammunition.
- 3) Replacement of electric wiring on both broadside guns.
- 4) Clamps to fasten the smoke floats so they may be installed in the racks designed for them.
- 5) Repair of wooden decks inside 20mm gun tubs.
- 6) Replacement of mark 5 and mark 1 sights on 20mm guns by mark 4 sights in order to have uniformity to facilitate training.
- 7) Installation of phone boxes at 20mm guns #4 and #6 and at the 5"51.
- 8) Placing of magazine loading racks on top of 20mm ready box covers in gun tubs.
- 9) Installation of a small ice-box and a loud speaker connection from the ship's radio in the Navy Chow hall. The Merchant Marine men and the Ship's officers have this equipment in their mess halls and the installation of same in the Navy Quarters would eliminate a source of friction.

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# 1997 REUNION UPDATE

by Neal Vermillion, 1997 Reunion Host

Well, it seems that things are falling into place with the National Reunion and I thought I would bring you up-to-date on things. Clem Sheridan and I met with Armed Guard Joe Colgan and another of the S.S. JOHN W. BROWN crew and the meeting was very productive. It will take about \$20,0. "UP FRONT MONEY" to move the ship to Alexandria, Virginia. I will have to have this amount by April 1, 1997 which will be our CUTOFF DATE FOR SHIP UNLESS IT'S NOT FULL AND THEN, ONLY FOR THOSE LATE ARMED GUARD LOCATED. I would appreciate it if you would notify those coming to the reunion who plan to sail on the ship to get their money in early, not only the ship but all the activities they are going to take part in. Advise them again that this is a "FIRST COME BASIS." When we fill up our allotted spaces, that's it. We have located a few more buses and we need "HEAD COUNTS" early to see if they are needed.

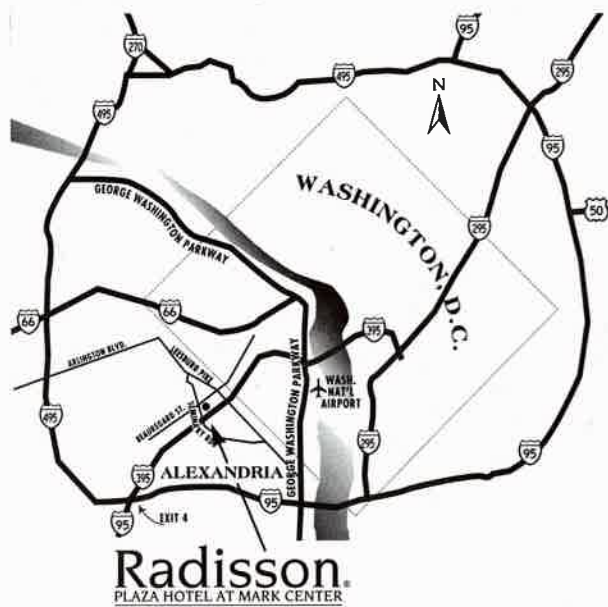
ONLY "700" people, including the SHIP'S CREW, can sail the ship at one time. That is the "LAW" and we have to abide by it. All persons who are sailing the BROWN "MUST" GET THEIR TICKET FROM ME BY MAIL! If the weather doesn't permit a sailing, we will have to work out something different for the crew to do. The weather is our biggest worry. I hope the crew understand. If the ship comes to Alexandria, we still have to pay the "UP FRONT MONEY" anyway whether she sails or not. Now, CAL, I know what you mean when you say that there is a lot to know and do. And as you say, "Things will fall into place."

**SPECIAL NOTICE FOR THOSE ON STRICT DIETS!!** Special Diets persons are to notify Chris Lawing, Catering Division on the Hotel Staff, and also let me know before HOTEL CUTOFF DATE of APRIL 8, 1997. I can not handle this nor HANDICAP SERVICE. I will have more to do than humanly possible. If we have any changes after you send out the next "POINTER," it will be in their packet upon arrival.

Please tell them that "ONLY YOU" can tell them when the next "POINTER" is being printed and coming out. None of that is in my "CORNER." Ask them to read the "POINTER" real good and hang on to it and if they need another copy, ask them to contact you as you told me that you have extra copies. The raffle tickets are coming in and it sure helps. Let them know that the "Lucky Winners" will be posted in the "POINTER" as in the past. Ask them to limit their time on the phone calls as I did not get a 2nd phone line in due to the high cost. Tell the women that the "TEA PARTY" is for them and to take part. Dress code is as you are. Louise Moran will have a great treat for them.

It is difficult to remember all the things I need to tell them so I will close with a suggestion and **THAT IS FOR THEM TO FOLLOW DIRECTIONS.** Those of you who are flying into Washington International Airport can ride the Radisson's free shuttle bus to the hotel. Just look for the Radisson courtesy phone when you arrive at the airport. The shuttle leaves every half hour. Once the Radisson Hotel is filled, we have the RAMADA PLAZA

HOTEL, 4641 Kenmore Ave., Alexandria, Va. 22304, 703-751-4510. Be sure to tell them ARMED GUARD. You can also try 1-800-228-2828 if you like. Trouble with the 800 numbers is they may say the hotel is full as they go by computer printouts. If they need more information on the WASHINGTON, D.C. area, have them contact the WASHINGTON VISITORS ASSOC., 1212 New York Ave NW., 20005, 202-789-7000 and request a free Visitor's Guide. REMEMBER!! CUTOFF DATES FOR HOTEL ROOMS-APRIL 8, 1997.



## Radisson Plaza Hotel at Mark Center

In Alexandria at I-395 and Seminary Rd. (exit 4).

**From the South:**  
1-95 to I-395 to Seminary Rd., and left.

**From the North:**  
I-95 to I-295 South to I-395 South, to Seminary Rd., and right.

# U.S. Navy Armed Guard WW II 16TH National Reunion

## May 1-6,1997

### HOTEL RATE:

**\$82.00**

**Plus 9% Tax**

**Radisson Plaza Hotel at Mark Center**  
**5000 Seminary Road, Alexandria, Va. 22311**  
**1-703-845-1010 Fax 1-703-820-6425**  
**1-800-333-3333 - TELL THEM "ARMED GUARD"**

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### ITINERARY AND RESERVATIONS

Thursday, May 1 - Registration begins - 8 AM til 5 PM  
Hospitality/Memorabilia Room opened from 9AM til Midnight, DAILY.  
On your own after registering. Familiarize yourself with Hotel and Area.  
SHIPS STORE FOR CAPS, ETC. OPEN Daily 9 AM-5 PM. CLOSING SCHEDULE TO BE POSTED.

**FRIDAY MAY 2** Registration begins - 8 til 10 AM and 3 PM til 5 PM  
On our own (ZED MERRILL MAY SHOW "FORGOTTEN VALOR")

**SATURDAY, MAY 3** Registration 8 AM til 9 AM. Business meeting 8 AM-11 AM  
LADIES TEA-12 Noon til 3:PM Each \$12.00 TOTAL \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
SOCIAL HOUR 6-7 PM DINNER-DANCE 7 PM-Midnight Each \$26.00 TOTAL \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**SUNDAY MAY 4** Breakfast Each \$15.00 TOTAL \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Buses leave at 8:30 for Navy Memorial Each \$15.00 TOTAL \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
MEMORIAL SERVICE 10 AM THEN: BUS TO KOREAN WAR AND  
VIETNAM MEMORIAL WALL. LUNCH ON YOUR OWN AT SITE IN THE AREA.

**MONDAY MAY 5** Buses-9 AM to John W. Brown Cruise Each \$80.00 TOTAL \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Includes bus, box lunch and refreshments (those who don't wish  
to sail but want bus to and from OL' TOWN Each \$15.00 TOTAL \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
DINNER (CASUAL OUTSIDE) Each \$25.00 TOTAL \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**TUESDAY MAY 6** 8 AM BREAKFAST (SIT DOWN) Each \$13.00 TOTAL \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
TOASTS - SO LONGS - SEE YOU NEXT YEAR

**GRAND TOTAL \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

**MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: "U.S.N.ARMED GUARD WWII."** Fill out and make a copy of this form and bring it with your cancelled check for proof, in case of mixup.

**IT'S ALWAYS A GOOD POLICY TO BRING YOUR ROOM CONFIRMATION FORM, TOO.**

Send Checks or Money Order to: "U.S.N. ARMED GUARD," DOROTHY and NEAL VERMILLION, HOSTS,  
8286 MARY LEE LN., LAUREL, MD. 20723-1171, TELEPHONE 301-776-6734.

CHECK NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_ DATE PAID \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_, 199\_\_\_\_ HANDICAPPED?\_\_\_\_ YOUR LADY? \_\_\_\_  
LAST NAME \_\_\_\_\_ FIRST \_\_\_\_\_ M. \_\_\_\_\_ LADY'S NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
STREET AND NO. \_\_\_\_\_ BOX \_\_\_\_\_ APT \_\_\_\_\_ CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_  
ZIP \_\_\_\_\_ +4 \_\_\_\_\_ TEL. (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ OFF (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

MAKE YOUR OWN RESERVATIONS AND PAY THEM FOR ROOMS. BEST TIME OF ARRIVAL BY CAR IS 10 AM - 11 AM AND 1 PM TIL 3 PM TO AVOID TRAFFIC. EASY TO GET TO OFF I-395. WASHINGTON NATIONAL AIRPORT NEARBY. HOTEL CHECK IN TIME 3 PM—(CHECKOUT-NOON)

VERMILLION REQUESTS LIMIT PHONE CALLS FROM 9:30 AM TIL 9:30 PM EST

**MAKE COPIES BEFORE FILLING OUT IN CASE YOU RUN INTO ANOTHER OF THE CREW!!**

WE HAVE ONLY 450 ROOMS AVAILABLE. FIRST COME-FIRST SERVED BASIS.  
BACKUP HOTEL-RAMADA INN-3 BLOCKS IF NEEDED

TIME OF EVENTS MAY BE ALTERED IF NEED BE.





Lone Sailor

U.S. NAVY MEMORIAL  
Washington, D.C.



## DEDICATION

To the Officers and Men who sailed the ships of  
World War II,  
especially to those who lost their lives, and to  
their families.

THE U.S.N. ARMED GUARD WW II VETERANS 16TH NATIONAL REUNION WILL BE HELD MAY 1-6, 1997 AT THE RADISSON HOTEL, 5000 SEMINARY DR., ALEXANDRIA, VA 22311, TELEPHONE (703) 845-1010, FAX (703) 820-6425. THE HOSTS ARE NEAL AND DOROTHY VERMILLION, 8286 MARY LEE LANE, LAUREL, MD 20723-1171. MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS EARLY. LET THEM KNOW YOU ARE A "U.S. NAVY ARMED GUARD WORLD WAR II VETERAN."



USN Armed Guard WW II Veterans  
5712 Partridge Lane  
Raleigh, N.C. 27609-4126  
1-(919)-876-5537

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**December 7, 1941**



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Support The USN Armed Guard  
WW II Veterans Reunions

FEB. / MAR., 1997